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بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



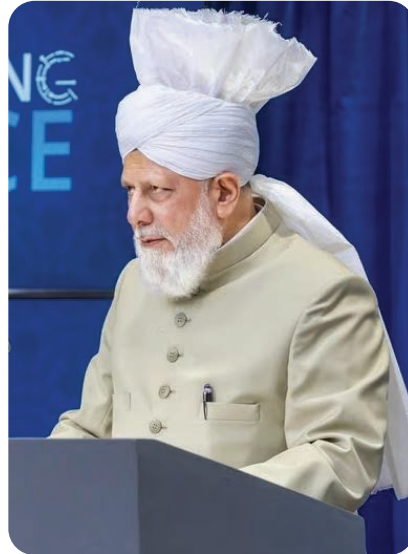
His Majesty The King's Coronation Celebrations Across Ahmadiyya Community Centres in UK



In the Name of Allah, Most Gracious Ever Merciful



5. Muhammad (sa):
The Great Exemplar



9. Serving humanity
is fundamental

16. Virtual Meetings held with Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba)

Virtual Meeting of
Lajna Members
from Italy

12. Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba) inaugurates Baitus Salaam Mosque in Scunthorpe, UK

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Origins of Western Culture



The Holy Qur'an

27. And call to mind when We assigned to Abraham the site of the House and said, 'Associate not anything with Me and keep My house clean for those who perform the circuits, and those who stand up and those who bow and prostrate themselves in Prayer;

28. 'And proclaim unto men the Pilgrimage. They will come to thee on foot, and on every lean camel, coming by every distant, deep track,

29. 'That they may witness the benefits provided for them and may mention the name of Allah, during the appointed days, over the quadrupeds of the class of cattle that He has provided for them. So eat thereof and feed the distressed and the needy.

30. 'Then let them accomplish their needful acts of cleansing, and fulfil their vows, and go round the Ancient House.'

31. That is Allah's commandment. And whoso honours the things declared sacred by Allah, it will be good for him with his Lord. And the eating of the flesh of all cattle is made lawful to you except that which has already been announced to you in the Qur'an. Shun, therefore, the abomination of idols, and shun all words of untruth,

32. Devoting all your worship and obedience to Allah, not associating anything with Him. And whoso associates anything with Allah, falls, as it were, from a height, and the birds snatch him away or the wind blows him away to a far-off place.

33. The truth is that whoso honours the sacred Signs of Allah—that, indeed, proceeds from the righteousness of hearts.

34. In these offerings are benefits for you for an appointed term, then their place of sacrifice is at the Ancient House.

35. And for every people We appointed rites of Sacrifice, that a they might mention the name of Allah over the quadrupeds of the class of cattle that He has provided for them. So your God is One God, therefore, submit ye all to Him. And give thou glad tidings to the humble,

36. Whose hearts are filled with awe when the name of Allah is mentioned, and who patiently endure whatever befalls them, and who observe Prayer and spend out of what We have bestowed upon them.

37. And among the sacred Signs of Allah We have appointed for you the sacrificial camels. In them there is much good for you. So mention the name of Allah over them as they stand tied up in rows. And when they fall down dead on their sides, eat thereof and feed him who is needy but contented and him also who supplicates. Thus have We subjected them to you, that you may be grateful.

38. Their flesh reaches not Allah, nor does their blood, but it is your righteousness that reaches Him. Thus has He subjected them to you, that you may glorify Allah for His guiding you. And give glad tidings to those who do good.

وَإِذْ بَوَّأْنَا لِإِبْرَاهِيمَ مَكَانَ الْبَيْتِ أَنْ لَا تُشْرِكْ بِي شَيْئًا
وَطَهِّرْ بَيْتِيَ لِلطَّائِفِينَ وَالْقَائِمِينَ وَالرُّكَّعِ السُّجُودِ ۖ وَأَذِّنْ
فِي النَّاسِ بِالْحَجِّ يَأْتُوكَ رِجَالًا وَعَلَى كُلِّ ضَامِرٍ يَأْتِينَ
مِنْ كُلِّ فَجٍّ عَائِقٍ ۖ لِيَشْهَدُوا مَنَافِعَ لَهُمْ وَيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ
اللَّهِ فِي أَيَّامٍ مَّعْلُومَاتٍ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ
الْأَنْعَامِ ۖ فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْفَقِيرِ ۖ ثُمَّ
لْيُقْضَىٰ تَقَاتُلُهُمْ وَلْيُؤْفُوا نُدُورَهُمْ وَلْيَطَّوَّفُوا بِالْبَيْتِ
الْعَتِيقِ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ وَمَنْ يُعْظَمْ حُرْمَتِ اللَّهِ فَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَهُ
عِنْدَ رَبِّهِ ۖ وَأَحَلَّتْ لَكُمْ الْأَنْعَامَ إِلَّا مَا يُثْلَىٰ عَلَيْكُمْ
فَاجْتَنِبُوا الرِّجْسَ مِنَ الْأَوْثَانِ وَاجْتَنِبُوا قَوْلَ الزُّورِ
ۖ حَنَفَاءَ لِلَّهِ غَيْرَ مُشْرِكِينَ بِهِ ۖ وَمَنْ يُشْرِكْ بِاللَّهِ
فَكَانَ خَسْرًا ۖ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ فَتُخَطَفُ الطَّيْرُ أَوْ تَهْوِي بِهِ الرِّيحُ
فِي مَكَانٍ سَحِيقٍ ۖ ذَٰلِكَ وَمَنْ يُعْظَمْ شَعَائِرَ اللَّهِ فَإِنَّهَا
مِنْ تَقْوَى الْقُلُوبِ ۖ لَكُمْ فِيهَا مَنَافِعُ إِلَىٰ أَجَلٍ مُّسَمًّى
ثُمَّ مَحِلُّهَا إِلَى الْبَيْتِ الْعَتِيقِ ۖ وَلِكُلِّ أُمَّةٍ جَعَلْنَا
مَنْسَكًا لِّيَذْكُرُوا اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَىٰ مَا رَزَقَهُمْ مِنْ بَهِيمَةِ
الْأَنْعَامِ ۖ فَالْهُكْمُ إِلَهُ ۖ وَاحِدٌ فَلَهُ أَسْلِمُوا ۖ وَبَشِّرِ الْبُخْتِينِ
ۖ الَّذِينَ إِذَا ذُكِرَ اللَّهُ وَجِلَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَالصَّابِرِينَ عَلَىٰ مَا
أَصَابَهُمْ وَالْبَاقِيْنَ الصَّلَاةَ ۖ وَمِمَّا رَزَقْنَاهُمْ يُنْفِقُونَ
ۖ وَالْبُدْنَ جَعَلْنَاهَا لَكُمْ مِنْ شَعَائِرِ اللَّهِ لَكُمْ فِيهَا خَيْرٌ ۖ
فَإِذْكُمُ اسْمَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْهَا صَوَافٍ ۖ فَإِذَا وَجَبَتْ جُنُوبُهَا
فَكُلُوا مِنْهَا وَأَطِيعُوا أَمْرَ الْفَقِيرِ ۖ وَابْعَثْ كَذَلِكِ سَخَرْنَاهَا لَكُمْ
لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ ۖ لَنْ يَنَالَ اللَّهُ لُحُومُهَا وَلَا دِمَاؤُهَا
وَلَكِنْ يَنَالُهُ تَقْوَىٰ مِنْكُمْ ۖ كَذَلِكِ سَخَرْنَا لَكُمْ لِتَكْبِرُوا
اللَّهُ عَلَىٰ مَا هَدَىٰكُمْ ۖ وَبَشِّرِ الْمُحْسِنِينَ

Hadith

Narrated Mikhnaf ibn Sulaym: We were staying with the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) at Arafat; he said: O people, every family must offer a sacrifice every year

Sunan Abi Dawud : The Book of Sacrifice : Chapter: What Has Been Reported Regarding The Obligation Of The Sacrifices.

Umm Salama, the wife of Allah's Apostle (ﷺ), reported Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) to have said: He who has a sacrificial animal with him whom (he intends) to offer as sacrifice, and he enters the month of Dhu'l-Hijja, he should not get his hair cut or nails trimmed until he has sacrificed the animal.

Sahih Muslim: The Book of Sacrifice: Chapter: When the first ten days of Dhul-Hajjah begin, it is forbidden for the one who wants to sacrifice.

"I attended the Eid Al-Adha' with the Prophet (ﷺ) at the Musalla. When he finished his Khutbah, he descended from his Minbar and was given a male sheep. The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) slaughtered it with his hand and said: 'Bismillah, Wa Allahu Akbar, this is from me and whoever does not have the means to slaughter from my Ummah."

Tirmidhi: The Book on Sacrifices: Chapter: What Is Said Upon Slaughtering.

عَنْ عَامِرِ أَبِي رَمْلَةَ، قَالَ أُنْبَأْنَا مِنْ خَنْفِ بْنِ سُلَيْمٍ، قَالَ وَنَحْنُ وَتُوقُوفٌ مَعَ رَسُولِ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ بِعَرَفَاتٍ قَالَ يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ، إِنَّ عَلَى كُلِّ أَهْلِ بَيْتٍ فِي كُلِّ عَامٍ أُضْحِيَّةً.

(ابوداود كتاب الضحايا باب ما جاء في إيجاب الأضاحي)

سَمِعْتُ سَعِيدَ بْنَ مُسَيْبٍ يَقُولُ سَمِعْتُ أُمَّ سَلَمَةَ، زَوْجَةَ النَّبِيِّ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ تَقُولُ: قَالَ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ صَلَّى اللَّهُ عَلَيْهِ وَسَلَّمَ مَنْ كَانَ لَهُ ذَبْحٌ يَذْبَحُهُ فَإِذَا أَهْلٌ هَلَالٌ ذِي الْحِجَّةِ، فَلَا يَأْخُذَنَّ مِنْ شَعْرِهِ، وَلَا مِنْ أَظْفَارِهِ شَيْئًا حَتَّى يُضَحَّى.

(مسلم كتاب الأضاحي باب نهى من دخل عليه عشر ذى الحجة)

عن جابر بن عبد الله قال شهدت مع النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم الأضحية بالبصل، فلما قضى خطبته نزل عن منبره، فأتى بكبش، فذبحه رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم بيده، وقال بسم الله، والله أكبر، هذا عني وعنكم لم يضح من أمتي.

(ترمذي كتاب الأضاحي باب الحقيقة بشاة)

Extract from the Writings of the Promised Messiah ﷺ

No individual who spends that which is useless and worthless can claim to have done a good deed. The door of virtue is narrow, so bear well in mind that no one can enter it by spending things of no value. There is a clear statement in the Quran as follows:

لَنْ تَنَالُوا الْبِرَّ حَتَّى تُنْفِقُوا مِمَّا تُحِبُّونَ ۚ

Meaning, until you spend those things which are most beloved to you and most dear, you cannot attain the rank of being loved and held dear by God. If you do not wish to bear hardship and do not seek to adopt true piety how can you succeed and triumph? Did the noble companions reach the ranks they achieved for nothing? A person must shoulder many expenses and pains to attain worldly titles and only after this, does a person manage to secure a minor title, which does not even bring about inner satisfaction and comfort.

Now reflect, was the title 'Allah was pleased with them', being a sign of inner comfort, tranquillity of heart and the Lord's pleasure, attained easily without effort? The fact is that the pleasure of God Almighty, which is the cause of true happiness, cannot be attained until one bears temporary hardships. God cannot be deceived. Blessed are those who do not care for suffering sustained in order to acquire the pleasure of Allah. For the light of eternal bliss and everlasting comfort is granted to a believer after this temporary hardship.

Muhammad (sa): The Great Exemplar

FRIDAY SERMON DELIVERED AT BAITUL FUTUH MOSQUE, MORDEN, LONDON, UK ON JUNE 2ND 2023



‘Life of the Holy Prophet^(sa): Circumstances Leading to the Battle of Badr’

After reciting *Tashahhud*, *Ta’awwuz*, and *Surah al-Fatihah*, His Holiness, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^(aba) said that the lives, incidents and sacrifices of the Companions who took part in the Battle of Badr were detailed in a series of sermons. His Holiness^(aba) said that many have expressed to him that the life of the Holy Prophet^(sa) should also be detailed because it was only due to being attached with him that the Companions achieved high ranks. They not only believed but they embodied the Unity of God as taught by the Holy Prophet^(sa).

His Holiness^(aba) said that over the years, he has highlighted various aspects of the Holy Prophet^(sa) in his sermons. However, his life was such that it cannot be limited to certain aspects. His qualities were so vast that they cannot even be encompassed over the course of a number of sermons. Hence, his life will continue to be mentioned, in fact, every sermon or address comprises some mention of an aspect of the Holy Prophet’s (sa) life because our lives revolve around him. We cannot act according to the *Shariah* without his example.

Circumstances Leading Up to the Battle of Badr

His Holiness^(aba) said that today he would begin a series of sermons

about the Holy Prophet^(sa) in relation to the Battle of Badr. Before mentioning the battle itself, His Holiness^(aba) said that it is important to understand the circumstances which led to the battle happening in the first place. His Holiness^(aba) quoted Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^(ra) who writes:

‘The Makkan life of the Holy Prophet^(sa), the cruelties which were inflicted upon the Muslims by the Quraish and the schemes they employed in order to expunge Islām, were enough reason for war to break out between any two nations, in every era, and in all types of circumstances. History substantiates that in addition to extremely degrading mockery, and exceedingly offensive taunt and slander, the disbelievers of Makkah forcefully stopped the Muslims from worshipping the One God and announcing His Unity. They were very brutally beaten and battered mercilessly, their wealth was usurped unlawfully, they were boycotted in an attempt to kill and ruin them, while some were martyred ruthlessly and their women were dishonoured. This was to the extent that disturbed by these cruelties, many Muslims left Makkah and migrated to Abyssinia. However, the Quraish did not rest at this either and sent a delegation to the Royal Court of the Negus in an attempt that these *Muhājirīn* would somehow return to Makkah and the Quraish would become successful in reverting them from their faith, or eliminating them. Then, great pains were inflicted upon the Master and Leader of the Muslims, who was dearer to them

than their own souls, and he was subjected to all kinds of suffering. Upon professing the name of God, the friends and comrades of the Quraish bombarded the Holy Prophet^(sa) with stones in Tā'if, to the extent that his body became drenched in blood. Ultimately, with the agreement of all the representatives of the various tribes of the Quraish, it was decided in the National Parliament of Makkah that Muḥammad (sa), the Messenger of Allāh, be assassinated so that all traces of Islām may be wiped out, and Divine Unity may be brought to an end. Then, in order to practically implement this bloody resolution, the youth of Makkah who were from the various tribes of the Quraish, assembled a group and attacked the home of the Holy Prophet^(sa) by night. However, God protected the Holy Prophet^(sa), and he departed from his home - leaving them in the dust - and he took refuge in the cave of Thaur. Were these cruelties and bloody resolutions not then equivalent to an announcement of war by the Quraish? In the backdrop of these incidents, can any sensible individual assert that the Quraish of Makkah were not at war with Islām and the Muslims? Then could these cruelties of the Quraish not become sufficient grounds to warrant a defensive war by the Muslims? In such circumstances, could any honourable nation of the world, which has not resigned itself to suicide, stand back from the acceptance of such an ultimatum as was given to the Muslims by the Quraish? Most definitely, if there had been another nation in place of the Muslims, they would have entered the field of battle against the Quraish much earlier. The Muslims, however, were ordered to exhibit patience and forgiveness by their Master. As such, it is written that when the persecution of the Quraish intensified, 'Abdur-Rahmān bin 'Auf^(ra), and other Companions, presented themselves before the Holy Prophet^(sa), and sought permission to fight the Quraish, but the Holy Prophet^(sa) responded:

"For now, I have been ordered to pardon. Thus, I cannot give you permission to fight."

As such, the Companions bore every pain and insult in the way of religion, but did not let go of the handle of patience. When the goblet of the persecution of the Quraish had been satiated and began to overflow; and the God of this universe found the divine message to have been conveyed incontrovertibly, it was only then that God ordered His servant to leave the city. For now, the matter had exceeded the limit of forgiveness, and the time had come when the perpetrators would reach their evil end. Hence, this migration of the Holy Prophet^(sa) was a sign of the acceptance of the ultimatum of the Quraish. It was a subtle indication by God of the announcement of war; both the Muslims and disbelievers understood this. As such, during the consultation at *Dārun-Nadwah*, when an individual proposed that the Holy Prophet^(sa) should be exiled from Makkah, the chieftains of the Quraish rejected this proposal on the basis that if Muḥammad (sa) was to leave Makkah, the Muslims would definitely accept their ultimatum and enter the field of battle in opposition to them. Upon the occasion of the second *Bai'at* at 'Aqabah, when the question of the migration of the Holy Prophet^(sa) arose before the *Anṣār* of Madīnah, they immediately said, *"This entails that we should become prepared for war against the whole of Arabia."* When the Holy Prophet^(sa) left Makkah, he cast a sorrow-stricken glance upon the boundaries of Makkah and said, *"O Makkah! You were more beloved to me than all other cities, but your people have not allowed me to live here."* Upon this, Ḥaḍrat Abū Bakr^(ra) said, *"They have exiled the Messenger of God. Now they shall indeed be destroyed."*

In summary, until the Holy Prophet^(sa) resided in Makkah, he endured all kinds of torment, but did not take up the sword against the Quraish. The reason being that firstly, before any measures could be taken against the Quraish, according to the custom of Allāh, the divine message needed to be conveyed incontrovertibly, and this called for respite. Secondly, it was also the desire of God that the Muslims exhibit a model of forgiveness and patience to that final limit whereafter remaining silent was equivalent to suicide, which

cannot be deemed a commendable deed by any sensible individual. Thirdly, the Quraish headed a kind of democratic government in Makkah and the Holy Prophet^(sa) was one of its citizens. Hence, good citizenship demanded that until the Holy Prophet^(sa) remained in Makkah, he respect the authority, and not allow anything as would disturb the peace, and when the issue exceeds the limit of forgiveness, he migrate from there. Fourthly, it was also necessary that until his people had become deserving of punishment due to their actions in the estimation of God, and until the time to destroy them had not arrived, the Holy Prophet^(sa) live among them, and when the time arrives, he migrate from there. The reason being that, according to the custom of Allāh, until a Prophet of God remains within his people, they are not struck by a punishment as would destroy them. When a destructive punishment is impending, the Prophet is ordered to leave such a place. Due to these reasons, the migration of the Holy Prophet^(sa) possessed distinct indications within it, but it is unfortunate that these wrong-doing people did not recognize them, and continued to grow in their tyranny and oppression. For if the Quraish had abstained even now, and had refrained from employing a course of compulsion in religion, and had permitted the Muslims to live a life of peace, then God is the Most Merciful of those who are Merciful, and His Messenger was also *Rahmatullil-'Ālamīn*. Indeed, even then they would have been forgiven. However, the writings of divine decree were to be fulfilled. The migration of the Holy Prophet^(sa) served as fuel upon the fire of the Quraish's enmity and they stood up with an even greater zeal and uproar than before, to obliterate Islām.

In addition to inflicting persecution and tyranny upon the poor and weak Muslims, who until now were still in Makkah, the first undertaking of the Quraish, as soon as they found out that the Holy Prophet^(sa) had left Makkah, was that they set out to pursue him. They scanned every inch of the Valley of Bakkah, in search of the Holy Prophet^(sa) and even reached the mouth of the cave of Thaur. However, Allāh the Exalted aided the Holy Prophet^(sa) and placed such a veil upon the eyes of the Quraish, that after having reached the very place of destination, they returned frustrated and unsuccessful. When they became disappointed in this search, they made a public announcement that any individual who brought Muḥammad back - dead or alive - would receive a bounty of a hundred camels, which is equivalent to approximately 20,000 Rupees in today's currency.'

His Holiness^(aba) explained that this was the value at the time in which Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^(ra) wrote this book. Today, that would equate to tens of millions of pounds.

Threats of the Quraish Against the Muslims

His Holiness^(aba) continued quoting, 'Many young men from the various tribes of the Quraish set out in all directions to search for the Holy Prophet^(sa), in greed of the bounty. As such, the pursuit of Surāqah bin Mālik, which has already been mentioned in Volume I of this book, was also a result of this announcement of reward. However, the Quraish were made to confront failure in this scheme as well. If one contemplates, for war to break out between two nations, even this sole reason is enough, in that a bounty of this nature is set for the Master and Leader of the other. In any case, when this scheme also proved unsuccessful and the Quraish found out that the Holy Prophet^(sa) had reached Madīnah safe and sound, as it has been mentioned above, the chieftains of the Quraish sent a terribly threatening letter to the head chieftain of Madīnah, 'Abdullāh bin Ubayy bin Sulūl, and his companions:

"You have given protection to an individual of ours (i.e., Muḥammad (sa)), and we swear in the name of Allāh that you shall either leave him and declare war against him, or in the least, exile him from your city. If not, we shall most definitely gather our entire army and attack you; and we shall kill your men and take your women into our own possession, making them lawful unto ourselves."

The anxiety which could have clung to the poor *Muhājirīn* due to this letter is evident, but a tremor of fear also surged through the *Anṣār* as well. When the Holy Prophet^(sa) received news of this, he went to ‘Abdullāh bin Ubayy himself. The Holy Prophet^(sa) reasoned with him and calmed him down saying, “*Your very own kith and kin are with me, will you fight against your own loved ones?*” It was in these days that Sa’d bin Mu’ādh^(ra), chieftain of the Aus, came to Makkah for the purpose of ‘*Umrah*. Upon seeing him, the eyes of Abū Jahl gorged with blood in rage and he furiously said, “*You have (God-forbid) given protection to that renegade (Muḥammad (sa)). Do you believe that you will be able to protect him...?*” In this era, the Quraish were so preoccupied in uprooting Islām that when Walīd bin Mughīrah, a chief of Makkah was about to die, he began to weep helplessly. The people inquired of his suffering, to which he responded, “*I fear, lest the religion of Muḥammad (sa) might spread after my death.*” The leaders of the Quraish responded by saying, “*Do not worry, we guarantee that we shall not allow his religion to spread.*” All of these instances are subsequent to the migration, when the Holy Prophet^(sa) had left Makkah, distressed by the persecution of the Quraish, and it could be thought that the Quraish would leave the Muslims at their state. This was not all, rather, when the Quraish noticed that the Aus and Khazraj refused to give up their protection of the Holy Prophet^(sa), and it was apprehended that Islām may take root in Madīnah, they toured the other tribes of Arabia and began to incite them against the Muslims. Since the Quraish enjoyed a distinct influence upon the other tribes of Arabia, due to their guardianship of the Ka’bah, for this reason, upon the instigation of the Quraish, many tribes had become deadly enemies of the Muslims. The state of Madīnah was as if it had become surrounded by a raging fire. As such, the following narration has already been mentioned:

“*Ubayy bin Ka’b^(ra) who was from among the distinguished Companions narrates, ‘When the Holy Prophet^(sa) and his Companions migrated to Madīnah, and the Anṣār gave protection to them, in turn all of Arabia collectively stood up against the Muslims. In that era, the Muslims would not even put off their arms at night and during the day they would walk around armed in case of a sudden attack. They would say to each other that let us see if we live till such a time when we might be able to sleep in peace at night without any fear except the fear of God.’*”

The state of the Chief of Mankind himself was that:

“*In the beginning, when the Holy Prophet^(sa) arrived to Madīnah, he would often remain awake during the night in apprehension of an enemy attack.*”

With regards to the very same era, the Holy Qur’ān states:

“*O ye Muslims! And remember the time when you were few and were considered to be weak in the land, and were in constant fear lest people should snatch you away and destroy you. But God sheltered you and granted you support with His Succour and opened the doors of pure provisions upon you. Therefore, you should now live as thankful servants.*” (8:27)

This was the state of external threats and, even in Madīnah, the state was that until now, a substantial segment from among the Aus and Khazraj stood firm upon polytheism. Although they were apparently with their brethren and kindred, but in such circumstances, how could a polytheist be trusted? Secondly, were the hypocrites, who at the outset had accepted Islām, but in secret they were enemies of Islām, and their presence in Madīnah posed threatening possibilities. Thirdly, were the Jews, with whom although there was a treaty, but to these Jews the value of this treaty was nothing. Hence, in this manner, there were such elements present even in Madīnah itself,

which were no less than a store of hidden ammunition against the Muslims. A tiny spark by the Arabian tribes was enough to set this ammunition on fire, and destroy the Muslims of Madīnah with a single blast. At this vulnerable time, which was such that a more critical time had never dawned upon the Muslims before, divine revelation was sent to the Holy Prophet^(sa), that now he should also take up the sword in opposition to these disbelievers, who had entered the field of battle against him, sword in hand, purely by way of injustice and tyranny. In this manner, *Jihād* by the sword was announced.” (The Life & Character of the Seal of Prophets Vol II pp. 54-60)

The First Time Jihad of the Sword Was Permitted

His Holiness^(aba) said that according to the research of Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^(ra), the first verse regarding Jihad with the sword revealed to the Holy Prophet^(sa) was in 12 Safar 2 AH. It is also recorded in some narrations that this verse was revealed at the time of migration, as the Holy Prophet^(sa) had started sending envoys for the protection of Madīnah against real threats. In any case, this was the very first time that the Holy Prophet^(sa) had been given permission by God to take up the sword in defence against the vile injustices and cruelties that were being inflicted upon him. The Qur’anic verse revealed in this regard was:

“*Permission to fight is granted to the Muslims against whom the disbelievers have taken up the sword because they (i.e., the Muslims) have been wronged - And Allāh indeed has power to help them - Those who have been driven out of their homes unjustly, only because they said, ‘Our Lord is Allāh’ - And if Allāh the Exalted did not repel some men by means of others (by granting permission for defensive war), there would surely have been pulled down cloisters belonging to monks and Christian churches and Jewish synagogues and mosques, wherein the name of God is oft-commemorated. And Allāh the Exalted will surely help one who helps Him. Undoubtedly, Allāh the Exalted is Powerful, Mighty.*” (22:40-41)

His Holiness^(aba) said that not only was this for the protection of Muslims, but by naming the places of worship of other religions, this verse also protects the rights and freedoms of other religions as well.

Four Strategies Deployed During the Hostilities Against the Muslims

His Holiness^(aba) further quoted Hazrat Mirza Bashir Ahmad^(ra) who writes the initial four strategies used by the Holy Prophet^(sa):

‘**FIRSTLY:** The Holy Prophet^(sa) began travelling to nearby tribes and establishing peace treaties with them, so that the surrounding region of Madīnah would become free of threat. In this respect, the Holy Prophet^(sa) gave special consideration to those tribes who were situated close to the Syrian trade route of the Quraish. As every individual may gather, it was these tribes in particular, from whom the Quraish of Makkah could have derived most benefit against the Muslims and whose enmity could have resulted in severe threats for the Muslims.

SECONDLY: The Holy Prophet^(sa) began to dispatch small companies in order to obtain intelligence in different directions from Madīnah, so that he was able to remain informed of the movements of the Quraish and their allies; and the Quraish also understood that the Muslims were not oblivious, so that in this manner, Madīnah could be safeguarded from the dangers of sudden attacks.

THIRDLY: Another wisdom in dispatching these parties was so that the weak and poor Muslims of Makkah and its surrounding areas could find an opportunity by these means, to join the Muslims



of Madīnah. Until now, there were many people in the region of Makkah who were Muslims at heart, but were unable to publicly profess their belief in Islām due to the cruelties of the Quraish. Furthermore, due to their poverty and weakness, they were unable to migrate either, because the Quraish would forcefully hold back such people from migrating...

FOURTHLY: The fourth strategy employed by the Holy Prophet^(sa) was that he began to intercept the trade caravans of the Quraish which travelled from Makkah to Syria passing by Madīnah en route. The reason being that firstly, these caravans would spark a fire of enmity against the Muslims wherever they travelled. It is obvious that for a seed of enmity to be sown in the environs of Madīnah, was extremely dangerous for the Muslims. Secondly, these caravans would always be armed and everyone can appreciate that for such caravans to pass by so close to Madīnah was not empty of danger. Thirdly, the livelihood of the Quraish primarily depended on trade. Therefore, in these circumstances,

the most definitive and effective means by which the Quraish could be subdued, their cruelties could be put to an end, and they could be pressed to reconciliation, was by obstructing their trade route. As such, history testifies to the fact that among the factors which ultimately compelled the Quraish to incline towards reconciliation, the interception of these trade caravans played an extremely pivotal role. Hence, this was an extremely sagacious strategy, which yielded fruits of success at the appropriate time. Fourthly, the revenue from these caravans of the Quraish was mostly spent in efforts to eliminate Islām. Rather, some caravans were even sent for the sole purpose that their entire profit may be utilized against the Muslims. In this case, every individual can understand that the interception of these caravans, was in its own right, an absolutely legitimate motive.'The Life & Character of the Seal of Prophets Vol II pp. 90-92)

His Holiness^(aba) said that this topic would continue in future sermons.



Serving humanity is fundamental

HAZRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V (ABA) ADDRESSES IAAAE SYMPOSIUM 2023

Islamabad, UK, 10 June 2023: At 8:05pm, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V, may Allah be his Helper, arrived at the Masroor Hall, Islamabad, UK, for the concluding session of the International Association of Ahmadi Architects & Engineers' (IAAAE) European Symposium 2023.

Apart from those present in Islamabad, UK, other IAAAE members from countries such as the USA, India and Nigeria etc. joined the concluding session virtually.

After his arrival, Hazrat Amirul Momineen^{aa} conveyed *salaam* to all the attendees and then invited Abdul Razaq Sahib to recite a portion of the Holy Quran. The Quranic verses were from Surah Dahr, verses 9-12.

A report on the symposium was presented by Akram Ahmedi Sahib, Chairman of IAAAE, who said that the title of the symposium was "Engineering for Peace".

The chairman said their work accelerated after the pandemic, providing water to over 3800 locations, serving 3-5 million people and providing a source of renewable electricity and lighting to over 520 rural locations. He said they completed 26 villages in 10 countries last year and are now advancing to model towns, commencing in the Gambia. He said that they undertook 135 handpump rehabilitations, maintained 55 handpumps, installed 33 mini solar well systems, dug

nine boreholes, and the work IAAAE carried out benefitted over 250,000 people in 2022-23 across seven countries. These countries are Niger, Benin, Ghana, Liberia, Burundi, Kenya and Tanzania. He also said that they electrified over 520 villages in 2022-23. Consequently, six countries and 46,800 people were served with electricity and light in Africa.

The chairman said that based on Huzoor's^{aa} guidance, IAAAE is preparing to address issues and shocks resulting from global challenges and risks. They have worked on building affordable housing, food security and agriculture. He added they have started work on MITC, the Masroor International Technical College, elevating IAAAE impact to the next level, empowering those that they serve to stand on their own two feet. He said that they had started low-cost housing and mud houses as well. They are planning on building "Peace City" as well, where there will be two- and three-story houses at a low cost.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad, Khalifatul Masih V^{aa} then came to the podium to deliver the concluding address.

After reciting *tashahud* and *ta'awuz*, Hazrat Amirul Momineen^{aa} said:

"With the grace of Allah, today, the members of IAAAE have gathered together for their annual symposium to review the various projects and activities they have conducted over the past year and



to plan for the future.” Huzoor^{aa} said this event would enable all of the IAAAE members to reflect on the blessings of Allah and to offer gratitude to Him for granting them the opportunity and ability to serve humanity.

Huzoor^{aa} said, “[...] The core objective underpinning the establishment of the IAAAE is to serve the needs of the most vulnerable and weakest members of the society.”

Huzoor^{aa} added he initially instructed IAAAE to focus on providing clean water to people living in deprived and underprivileged parts of the world. Huzoor^{aa} acknowledged the efforts of IAAAE in fulfilling his directives by installing water wells and pumps in many remote villages across Africa under the “Water for Life” scheme. Huzoor^{aa} said IAAAE has built homes and shelters through its “Model Village” scheme. Huzoor^{aa} expressed that IAAAE has worked tirelessly to fulfil the various needs of the Jamaat by offering their time, expertise and skills on many projects in different countries.

Huzoor^{aa} said, with the grace of Allah, the scale of IAAAE’s ambitions and projects continues to increase. Huzoor^{aa} mentioned that IAAAE has undertaken to build and administer a technical training institute in Nigeria in order to train young people in various skills so that they may stand on their feet and contribute positively to society. Huzoor^{aa} said, “I pray that Allah the Almighty enables you to complete this project soon and that it fulfils its underlying objective of playing a major role in the progress and development of the nation and the African continent at large.”

Owing to the fragile state of the world, Huzoor^{aa} had instructed that IAAAE should consider how it could play its role in rebuilding society in case of a possible world war. “According to my instructions, IAAAE has formulated a plan detailing how shelter and accommodation could be rapidly constructed,” Huzoor^{aa} said. Hazrat Amirul Momineen^{aa} stated that IAAAE has also planned large-scale agricultural and food security projects.

Huzoor^{aa} emphasised that the core objective is to serve humanity as Islam instructs us to serve those in need and show compassion to all mankind. The Promised Messiah^{as} was sent for this very purpose of serving humanity.

The Promised Messiah^{as} said:

“Each day, every person should analyse himself and see to what extent he is concerned for the wellbeing of others and to what extent he shows love and compassion to his brothers.”

Huzoor^{aa} said that the Promised Messiah^{as} further mentioned a hadith and said that “On the Day of Judgement, Allah will say, ‘I was hungry and you did not feed Me, I was thirsty and you did not give Me water, I was sick but you did not comfort Me.’ Upon this, those being addressed would ask, ‘When were You hungry and we did not feed You, when were You thirsty and we did not give You water, and when were You sick and we did not comfort You.’ In reply, God Almighty will say, ‘A person dear to Me was suffering and you did not show any compassion and kindness to him. To show love to him would actually have been to show love to Me.’”

Huzoor^{aa} said that the Promised Messiah^{as} thus laid great emphasis on the fact that serving humanity is a fundamental component of our faith and something that God Almighty loves very much. Hence, whatever projects our Ahmadi architects and engineers are working on, be they installing water wells, building affordable homes, constructing model villages or providing energy and other essential services, their efforts should always be motivated purely out of love for humanity and the desire to attain the pleasure and nearness of Allah the Almighty.

Huzoor^{aa} said, “As members of IAAAE, you must always keep this point at the forefront of your minds and strive to emulate the example of the Promised Messiah^{as}.”

Huzoor^{aa} said he was pleased to see that the number of volunteers offering their services to the IAAAE has steadily increased and new

people are coming forward. Huzoor^{aa} said, “May Allah reward them for their good intentions and efforts. [...] I pray that many more people are inspired to serve the IAAAE in the years ahead.”

Huzoor^{aa} further said, “I pray that the IAAAE continues to go from strength to strength and plays an outstanding role in fulfilling the objective for which the Promised Messiah^{as} was sent in this era of serving humanity throughout the world irrespective of caste, colour and creed.”

Huzoor^{aa} said, “May Allah reward all of you for your sincere efforts and enable you for an immense source of relief and comfort for those whose lives are mired by perpetual struggle, hardship and destitution. *Amin*.”

Hazrat Amirul Momineen^{aa} then led everyone in silent prayer.

(Report prepared by Al Hakam)

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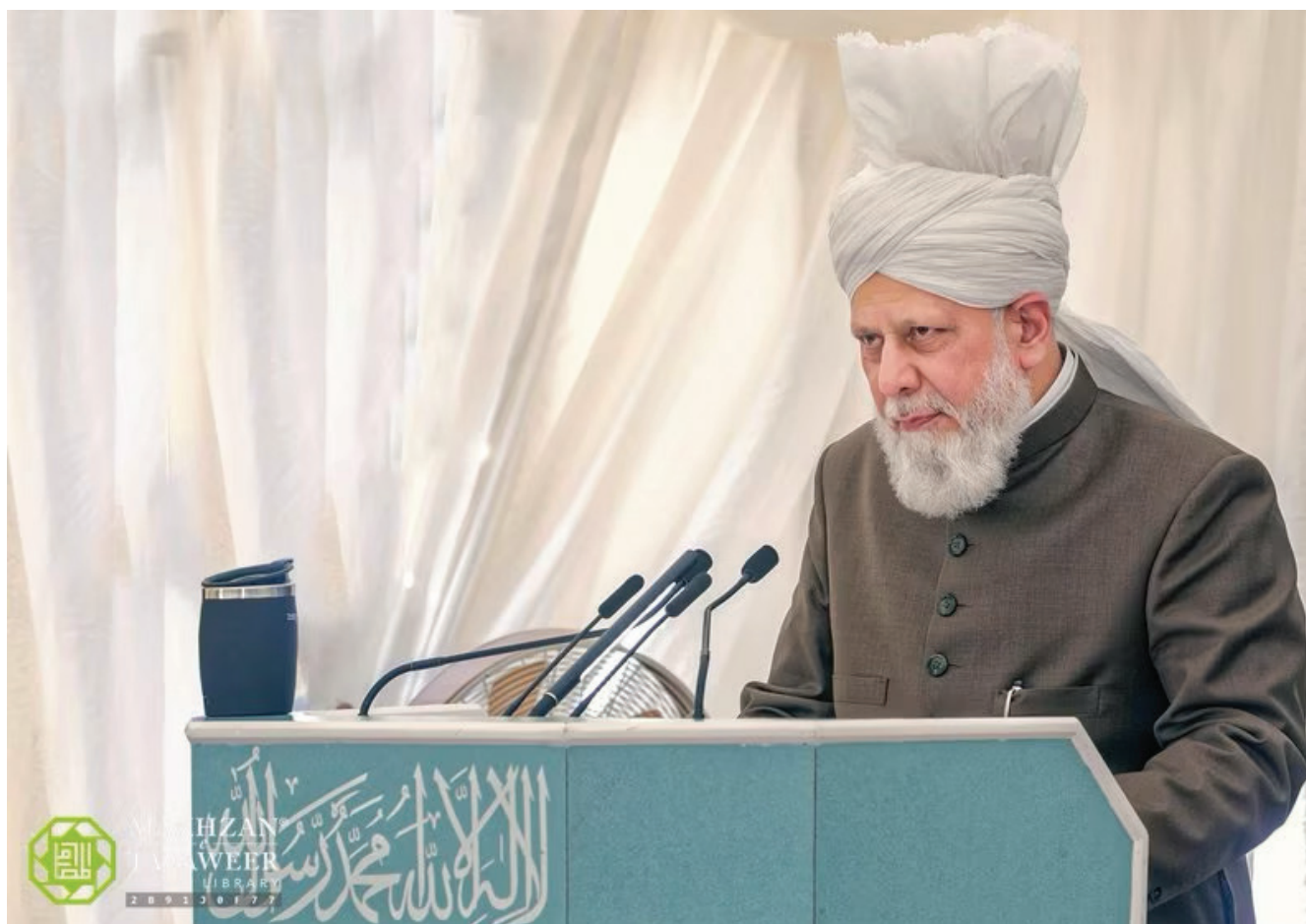
Hajj

Hajj is the annual Islamic pilgrimage to the holy city of Mecca in Saudi Arabia. It holds significant importance for Muslims around the world and is one of the five pillars of Islam which all those who are able must strive to complete at least once in their lifetime. Hajj takes place from the 8th to the 13th of Dhul-Hijjah, the last month of the Islamic (lunar) calendar. The importance of Hajj can be understood from various perspectives:

1. **Religious Obligation:** Hajj is an obligatory act of worship for physically and financially capable Muslims, as stated in the Quran. It is a fundamental duty for Muslims to perform Hajj at least once in their lifetime, provided they have the means to do so. Fulfilling this obligation is seen as a demonstration of faith and submission to the will of Allah.
2. **Spiritual Cleansing and Forgiveness:** Hajj is a journey of purification and spiritual rejuvenation. It is believed that performing the rituals of Hajj with sincerity and devotion can cleanse one's sins and lead to forgiveness from Allah. It provides an opportunity for Muslims to reflect on their lives, seek repentance, and strive for self-improvement.
3. **Unity and Equality:** Hajj brings together Muslims from diverse backgrounds, cultures, and nationalities, fostering a sense of unity and equality among believers. During Hajj, pilgrims dress in simple white garments (ihram) which symbolize the equality of all people before Allah. This collective experience of standing side by side, irrespective of social status or worldly possessions, reinforces the values of brotherhood and sisterhood in Islam.
4. **Historical and Cultural Significance:** Mecca holds immense historical and cultural importance in Islamic tradition. It is the birthplace of Prophet Muhammad and the site of the Kaaba, the holiest shrine in Islam. The rituals of Hajj are deeply rooted in the traditions and practices of Prophet Muhammad and the earlier Prophets, such as Abraham and Ishmael. By participating in Hajj, Muslims connect with their religious heritage and retrace the footsteps of their predecessors.
5. **Personal Transformation and Reflection:** Hajj is a transformative experience for many pilgrims. It is a physically and mentally demanding journey that requires patience, perseverance, and sacrifice. The rituals performed during Hajj, such as the Tawaf (circumambulation of the Kaaba) and the standing at Arafat, encourage self-reflection, introspection, and a deepened connection with Allah. Many pilgrims return from Hajj with a renewed sense of purpose, spirituality, and a commitment to living a righteous life.

Overall, Hajj holds immense significance in the lives of Muslims. It is a sacred journey that encompasses faith, spirituality, unity, and personal growth. By performing Hajj, Muslims strengthen their bond with Allah, seek forgiveness, and strive to lead a more virtuous life in accordance with Islamic teachings.

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‘May this mosque prove to be a shining beacon of peace’

HAZRAT KHALIFATUL MASIH V (ABA) INAUGURATES BAITUS SALAAM MOSQUE
IN SCUNTHORPE, UK

At around 16:00 BST on 17 June 2023, Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V, may Allah be his Helper, arrived at the premises for the inauguration of Baitus Salaam Mosque in Scunthorpe, UK, and unveiled the plaque of the mosque and led everyone in silent prayer. Hazrat Amirul Momineen^{aa} inspected the building and planted an olive tree, before proceeding inside the mosque and leading everyone in Zuhr and Asr *salat*. There, the local members also had the opportunity to have photographs taken with beloved Huzoor^{aa}. Huzoor^{aa} also granted an audience to some of the non-Muslim dignitaries, who had come to attend the inauguration.

Huzoor^{aa} then went to the formal reception marquee and conveyed *salaam* to all the attendees. Dignitaries, leaders of various faiths, friends, locals and neighbours were present for the reception.

Hassan Selby Sahib, missionary at Scunthorpe, recited verses 128-130 of Surah al-Baqarah from the Holy Quran and presented their English translation.

Syed Muzaffar Ahmad, the Regional Amir of North East, welcomed Huzoor^{aa} and all the attendees. He then gave an overview of the inception of the Baitus Salaam Mosque and shed light on the opposition they had to face when the request for permission to construct this mosque was presented before the council. Syed Muzaffar Ahmad Sahib expressed that the council upheld its values of tolerance and freedom of religion and gave permission for the mosque to be constructed.

Holly Mumby-Croft, Member of Parliament for Scunthorpe, was next to speak. She welcomed Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aa} to Scunthorpe and said that she had visited the mosque before and expressed her delight about the friendly atmosphere. She said that she was privileged to be at the reception.

Martin John Vickers, Member of Parliament for Cleethorpes, then expressed that he was delighted to be at the inauguration of the mosque and spoke about the challenges faced by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community before the construction of the mosque.



Councillor Janet Longcake, Mayor of North Lincolnshire Council, then shed light on the importance of community and expressed that, “the Ahmadiyya Community motto ‘Love for All, Hatred for None’, conveys unity,” and added that “your faith is one that promotes peace and harmony, something the world needs right now.”

Address by Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aa}

Then, Hazrat Amirul Momineen^{aa} came to the podium and after reciting *tashahhud* and *ta’awwuz*, Huzoor^{aa} said:

“Peace and blessing of Allah be upon you all. First of all, I sincerely thank all of our guests, who have joined us for the inauguration of our new mosque here in Scunthorpe.” He acknowledged the generosity of the guests as none of them was directly related to the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jamaat yet they accepted the invitation.

Huzoor^{aa} then said that certain hurdles arose before the construction of the mosque but with the grace of Allah, all issues were resolved and eventually, permission was granted. He thanked the council and the relevant authorities. He further expressed thanks and gratitude to “all members of the community who supported us in any way.” He emphasised, “Where we are most grateful to God Almighty we are also very grateful to those who helped us in the construction of the mosque.”

Stressing the importance of thankfulness in Islam, Huzoor^{aa} expressed, “Offering my appreciation to you is actually a religious duty because the Holy Founder of Islam, the Holy Prophet, Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him, stated that

a person who is not thankful to his fellow human beings cannot be grateful to God Almighty. So, from a religious perspective, I am duty-bound to offer my heartfelt appreciation to all of you.”

With regard to the funding for the mosque, Huzoor^{aa} explained that this mosque had been funded purely by the contributions of the members of the local *jamaat*, many of whom made huge financial sacrifices. They contributed to having a place of worship that would be a means of creating a suitable environment to uphold and practice Islam’s ideals and values.

Huzoor^{aa} then addressed the fears about Islam in the West and said, “Such fears are understandable, given the climate in which we live where there is a tendency to view Muslims with a degree of suspicion or even as extremist based on the portrayal of Islam in the media and the conduct of the few extremist individuals and groups in recent times.”

Reassuring the guests, however, Huzoor^{aa} said, “In this regard, rest assured that nothing could be further from the truth. Islam’s teaching is diametrically opposed to all forms of extremism or terrorism. Islam rejects all forms of violence and teaches peace and harmony, and desires for people of all beliefs and religions to live amicably together in a spirit of mutual tolerance and compassion. It calls for members of society to unite as human beings, irrespective of their differences, in the common cause of establishing peace and security for all mankind.”

Huzoor^{aa} said, “In terms of the objectives of mosques, on one occasion, the Founder of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, peace



be upon him, stated that ‘if a person wishes to raise awareness of Islam in any town or place, they should build a mosque in that area.’”

Hazrat Amirul Momineen^{aa} stated that it meant, if a mosque was built, non-Muslims would naturally come to observe Islam’s teachings and see how it promotes the spirit of love, peace and brotherhood amongst all people. They would see with their own eyes that where Muslims are duty-bound to fulfil the rights of Allah the Almighty, the teachings of Islam also require them to fulfil the rights of humanity and to seek the very best of all people, irrespective of their faith and beliefs.

Huzoor^{aa} said, “We Ahmadi Muslims advocate and subscribe to these true and peaceful teachings of Islam and reject unequivocally those who seek to malign and distort Islam’s noble teachings through their hateful rhetoric and extremist acts.”

Hazrat Amirul Momineen^{aa} said that some people did not understand what Islam actually was and what was the purpose of mosques. “I wish to make it crystal clear that the image created of Islam by extremists is entirely at odds with its actual teachings[...] Islam’s teachings are of peace, security and love,” Huzoor^{aa} emphasised.

Hazrat Amirul Momineen^{aa} said, “These are not just my personal views or empty words designed to please or impress you. Rather, these are the teachings of Islam’s Holy Book, which we believe to be the final law-bearing Book and the direct Word of God, received through revelation by the Holy Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings of Allah be upon him. I am speaking, of course, about the Holy Quran, which, for all Muslims, serves as the basis of our beliefs and how we live our lives. The Holy Quran makes it categorically clear that there is no room for extremism or compulsion in religious matters and that every person is free to live their life according to their beliefs and customs.”

Huzoor^{aa} said, “Wherever Muslims build mosques, they are built to emulate and spiritually mirror the true objectives of the first house of God, the Holy Ka’aba in Mecca, which is the most sacred and holy place in Islam.” He further said, “Indeed, it is the direction of the Holy Ka’bah that every Muslim turns towards whilst offering prayers.”

Hazrat Amirul Momineen^{aa} then gave the example of Chapter 25, verse 24 of the Holy Quran, “The true servants of the Gracious God are those who walk on the earth humbly and when the ignorant address them, they avoid them gracefully by saying peace.”

Huzoor^{aa} explained that in this verse, Muslims were commanded to remain humble and patient when they were subjected to harassment and to avoid conflict or disputes. “Muslims are taught that no effort should be spared in upholding the peace of society, to the extent that the Quran instructs Muslims to walk away in the face of intense provocation and offer *salaam*, that is, greetings of peace, to ignorant and abusive people who speak harshly or seek confrontation.”

Hazrat Amirul Momineen^{aa} said that some people might say that early Islamic history included incidents of warfare, but Huzoor^{aa} said, “In reality, these questions indicate an ignorance of early Islamic history.” Huzoor^{aa} said such views had been shaped by the opponents of Islam who presented only part of the story and did not give the whole account or context.

Huzoor^{aa} said, “After Islam was founded, the Holy Prophet Muhammad^{sa} and his followers were subjected to horrific cruelties and sustained oppression.” Many were murdered and they migrated to Medina. However, the idol worshipers of Arabia still did not permit them to live in peace. They waged war against them to eliminate Islam once and for all. Only in those extreme circumstances, Allah allowed them to fight a defensive war.

Huzoor^{aa} explained in light of the Holy Quran that Allah commanded Muslims to protect every worship place and defend every faith.

Hazrat Amirul Momineen^{aa} mentioned that the American scholar, Craig Considine, in his book, *People of the Book – Prophet Muhammad’s Encounters with Christians*, states “‘Muhammad and the believers of Muslims ummah created a nation founded upon allyship, civility, cross-cultural interactions, freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, freedom of speech, interreligious dialogue, mutual dependency and religious pluralism.’” [p. 384]

“Accordingly, these are the immaculate standards of religious freedom according to Islam, that all people should have the right to worship according to their religious beliefs and be free to congregate in their places of worship,” Huzoor^{aa} said.

Huzoor^{aa} said, “In essence, Muslims are duty-bound to not only fulfil the rights of their Creator but also to fulfil the rights of mankind.”

As Huzoor^{aa} shifted the focus of his speech to the present times, he made observations about the state of current global conflicts and explained, “Religious wars are no longer taking place. Rather, the conflicts we observe today are geopolitical in nature. If Muslims or Muslim nations are taking any part [in them], it is to fulfil their political ambitions and vested interests, and [they are] not motivated by their religion. Thus, in today’s society, it is not a question of Muslims against non-Muslims, nor are wars being fought to eliminate religion. In addition, it is wrong to suggest that conflict is limited to Muslim countries. The non-Muslim world is also engaged in warfare, as we see most prominently in Ukraine. Hence, as I have said, the wars taking place today are for territorial or political objectives. And it would be wholly unfair to link them to any religion or religious beliefs.”

It is for this reason and in the face of such global conflicts, Huzoor^{aa} said, that alongside building mosques and seeking to convey Islamic teachings, the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community places great emphasis on serving humanity.

Giving some examples of the humanitarian efforts of the



Community Huzoor^{aa} highlighted, “For example, we have built schools and hospitals in some of the most economically deprived and impoverished countries that provide education and health care to the local people. Further, our Community is providing access to clean water to destitute people living in remote and underprivileged parts of the world by installing water wells and pumps in their local communities.”

Underscoring the universal nature of these humanitarian services, Huzoor^{aa} clarified that, “All our humanitarian services are offered irrespective of religious beliefs. In fact, most people who benefit from our schools, hospitals, or other humanitarian projects do not adhere to any religion, or at least not to our religion [of Islam]. Our efforts are underpinned and inspired by the teachings of Islam and are rendered purely for the sake and betterment of humanity. We consider the burdens of the weakest members of society to be our own, and that it is our duty to provide health and comfort to all those who are in need or vulnerable.”

In his concluding remarks, Huzoor^{aa} said:

“In short, Islamic teaching obliges us to live peacefully and to coexist with other people. It requires us to serve our communities, to strive to enrich them, and to contribute to their development.”

“Now that this mosque has been opened, I am sure that local people in Scunthorpe and the surrounding areas will see for themselves these true Islamic values in practice. Consequently, I believe that if anyone still harbours any reservations or fears about this mosque, they will soon vanish. This mosque has been named ‘The Baitus Salaam Mosque,’ which literally means ‘The House of Peace’. In accordance with this name, I am confident that the local Ahmadi Muslims will be those who foster peace and love in society, observe the laws of the land, and excel in serving their Community and the wider society. God willing, they will forever reflect the true teachings of Islam.”

“In the end, I pray that this mosque proves to be a shining beacon of peace and a means of elevating and strengthening the fabric of societal cohesion. May Allah the Almighty enable the local Ahmadi Muslims to live up to their religious teachings, and may we all, for the betterment of our nation and the world at large, live together in peace and harmony.” *Amin.*

“With these words, I wish to reiterate my heartfelt gratitude to all of you for joining us this evening. May Allah the Almighty bless you

all. Thank you very much.”

As the event drew to its end, Huzoor^{aa} led everyone present in a silent prayer, following which dinner was served.

History of Scunthorpe Jamaat

Scunthorpe is an industrial town located in North Lincolnshire, within the ceremonial county of Lincolnshire, in England. In 2021, Scunthorpe was home to approximately 80,000 residents. The town is roughly a four-hour car journey away from the Mubarak Mosque in Islamabad, UK.

The Scunthorpe Jamaat has been profoundly fortunate and blessed, for Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aa} has graced it with his presence on seven distinct occasions over the years. His first visit took place in the year 2004.

The history of Scunthorpe Jamaat traces back to its humble beginnings in the late 90s, when it consisted of only a few families. In 2002, the Jamaat acquired 53 Cliff Closes Road, which served as a mission house for the Scunthorpe Jamaat. However, as time passed, the Jamaat rapidly outgrew this space, prompting the need for a larger mosque. Consequently, plans for a purpose-built mosque were submitted to the council for approval in 2016. On 24 March 2018, the foundation stone of the Jamaat’s new mosque was laid by Rafiq Ahmed Hayat Sahib, the Amir Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya UK.

Even though the Community faced significant opposition at the outset, they remained unwavering in their mission. In a beautiful testament to faith, perseverance, dedication and community spirit, the vision eventually materialised in the form of the “Baitus Salaam Mosque.” The mosque now stands not just as a building but as a symbol of peace, brought to life by the grace of Allah and the prayers and guidance of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aa}.

The Baitus Salaam Mosque is located at 53 Cliff Closes Road. The mosque includes a multi-purpose hall and a library. It has the capacity to accommodate 250-300 individuals. Nestled among homes, this mosque emanates a warm and inviting atmosphere. By the grace of Allah, the mosque was constructed solely through the contributions of the local members of Scunthorpe Jamaat.

(Report prepared by Al Hakam)



Virtual Meetings held with Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V (aba)

All reports have been adapted from the press releases issued by the Press & Media Office of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Jama'at.

Virtual Meeting of Lajna Members from Italy With Hazrat Amirul Momineen (aba)



On 14 May 2023, the World Head of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, the Fifth Khalifa (Caliph), His Holiness Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^(aba) held a virtual online meeting with members of Lajna Imaillah Italy (Ahmadiyya Muslim Women's Auxiliary).

His Holiness^(aba) presided the meeting from MTA Studios in Islamabad, Tilford, whilst the Amila members joined the meeting virtually from Bait-ul-Tauheed in San Pietro in Casale, Bologna, Italy.

Following a formal session that began with the recitation of the Holy Qur'an, attendees were given the opportunity to ask questions on a range of issues.

One attendee asked his Holiness^(aba) about the relationship between a husband and wife and how it impacts the children.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^(aba) said:

"When you get married, then men mostly – and sometimes women as well – they just forget what they promised with the other party. So, you should always realise that now your life is not for your own self; now there is a responsibility of some other lives (one's children) on your shoulders, and you have to bring them up in a way which is according to the teachings of Islam. And if you

are not showing respect to each other, you are not following the teaching of Islam, you are not discharging your duties you owe to Allah the Almighty, you are not following the Commandments of Allah the Almighty, you are not showing good morals, then it will harm your future generation."

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^(aba) continued:

"Instead of prioritising your own self, you should solve your problems amicably [between a husband and wife] so that your children should also learn a lesson from you that this is how we should behave with each other. [In this way] they will be brought up in a way which is purely the Islamic way... It's a matter of showing respect to each other. So, if a husband and wife both realise their duties, then it will never happen that they think that they are superior to the other."

Thereafter, an attendee expressed that she heard that His Holiness^(aba) mentioned that he visits every country where Ahmadi Muslims reside in his imagination prior to going to sleep and prays for them. She enquired what comes to mind when His Holiness is pondering over Italy.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^(aba) lovingly responded:

"I pray for Italy like I pray for all others as I visit them. I pray that Allah the Almighty keeps the Ahmadi Muslims of Italy under His Protection, that He guards them from all sorts of distress and that they are able to peacefully go to sleep at night and wake up rejuvenated in the morning. And that they remember Allah the

Almighty and become those who excel in good deeds. May Allah the Almighty protect them from all vices. So, there are various prayers that I do and I do so for you too.”

Following this, another attendee sought His Holiness^(aba) advice on serving the community by devoting one's life to the faith, in spite of not being a member of the *Waqf-e-Nau* (a scheme of devotion to faith). She asked how she can become a “*delight of the eyes*” for Khalifat.

His Holiness^(aba) praised her for her lofty goals and presented a number of examples of those who had served the faith to great extents but were yet not part of the *Waqf-e-Nau* scheme, such as women who dedicated their lives for the sake of their faith later in life and taught in schools of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community and took part in other charitable projects in Africa.

His Holiness^(aba) gave further guidance on fulfilling one's role as a devotee and urged Lajna members to propagate the faith, adhere to the teachings of the Promised Messiah (peace be upon him), and learn about the Holy Qur'an and the sayings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him).

Speaking about what would make the Khalifa of the time happy, Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^(aba) said:

“When the Khalifa of the time is made aware of the good works you do, he is filled with joy. As a result, he prays for you and that is indeed what is considered as the ‘delight of the eyes.’”

Another attendee asked His Holiness^(aba) if it is permissible to have non-Ahmadi friends and if so, how one's behaviour should be when propagating the message of Islam to them.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^(aba) responded:

“If you don't make friends from among non-Muslims, then how will you tell them about the peaceful teachings of Islam? Obviously, you will have to make friends from among non-Muslims and Muslims. And then, if you are a practising Muslim, you are following the teachings of Islam, you are offering your five daily prayers and during discussions you tell them about what the Holy Qur'an says about the rights of women, about the rights of other fellow beings, then this will open the avenues of conveying the message of Islam to them.”

A Lajna member asked His Holiness^(aba) that if a married couple are getting divorced, should they explain their decision to their children?

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^(aba) responded:

“Children are very clever. They already know that there is a conflict between their mother and father. So, if you take any decision to get divorced then if the children ask you why, then you should explain to them that this is the reason and there is no harm in telling them. They are sensible, they understand. But at the same time, both parents, father and the mother, should tell them that although we are going to get divorced, but it is the commandment of Allah the Almighty that you should behave well towards each of your parents.”

Thereafter, the attendee asked a follow-up question regarding

marriage. She enquired whether it is right for a woman to consider herself an equal partner in marriage and mentioned how some men assume superiority over women.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^(aba) elucidated the matter and said:

“It is quite right that you are equal partners as far as your rights, your freedom and your liberty is concerned. You have equal rights. At the same time, Islam has allocated some assignments to both husband and wife. The husband is responsible for running the household affairs and he should be the breadbasket of the house. If the woman is working, then husband should not say to her, ‘Because you are working, you should also share in the day-to-day expenses in the house as I expend.’ This is the responsibility of the husband. The money a woman earns, if she wants to spend the money on the household, on the children, on the utilities, that is at her own discretion.”

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^(aba) further stated:

“The woman is responsible for keeping her household affairs in line with the teachings of Islam... You should look after your children, train your children in the best way. When they come from school, they should know that their mother is at home, [they should know that], ‘she will receive me, she will welcome me and she will prepare food for me and she will do all those things which are necessary for my upbringing.’ Then if both of you realise their duties – the husband his duties and the wife her duties – then there should not be any conflict. Your household affairs will run smoothly and amicably.”

A Lajna member also asked His Holiness^(aba) how they can help people who don't feel comfortable in their gender, including those who resort to gender reassignment surgery.

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^(aba) said:

“Sometimes when a child feels that one of their siblings is being treated in a different way, then sometimes these type of thoughts arise in their minds. Also, sometimes, they are influenced from the outside world, from school atmosphere and sometimes by the lecture the teacher gives to them about gender. So, there is an outside influence on them that affects their sentiments, their emotions, and this is why they try to change their gender. They feel that if we change our gender, in this way we shall be more appreciated and respected. So, this is a psychological matter. If they wish, they should be psychologically evaluated. But nowadays, it is very much difficult. Those who take this decision, when they attain the age of fifteen or sixteen, then they become very much stubborn, and when they have decided that they will remain like this then nobody can do anything. So, we can only pray and advise them.”

Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad^(aba) again highlighted the responsibility of parents and said:

“This is the responsibility of parents that they treat their children with respect and give due respect to each of the children from the very childhood and to keep on advising them about the religious teachings.”



Peace Conference by Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Newcastle

"How to Achieve Eternal Peace"

By The Grace of Almighty Allah Ahmadiyya Muslim Community Newcastle was able to hold a Peace conference on the 4th of June 2023, 14:30 pm at Britannia Hotel. The topic of the conference was "How to achieve eternal peace. The attendance at the conference was 120 approx. including the Lord Mayor of Newcastle Councillor Veronica Dunn, the Worshipful Mayor of Gateshead Councillor Eileen McMaster, Mayor of Ponteland Councillor Karen Overbury and the Main Guest Imam of the London Mosque and Missionary In charge UK Imam Ata ul Mujeeb Rashed. There was representation from the Newcastle and Hexham Diocese Interreligious Team, Sikh Temple and the Chronicle.

The Conference started with the Recitation of the Holy Quran by Abdullah Sultan and its English Translation Muhammad Ahmed Shahid. The verses that were recited mentioned the idea of creating peace and harmony not to deride or defame other people.

Minhas Younas, President of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community, greeted all the distinguished guests in his welcome note and gave a rundown of the program.

Tahir Selby, Imam of the Hartlepool Mosque, then presented an introduction of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. He presented the beliefs of the Community and mentioned that the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was formed by Hazrat Mirza Ghulam Ahmad (May Peace be Upon Him) over 113 years ago for the purpose of bringing back the true teachings of Islam and to show the world what those teachings are. The teachings that were given to us by our Beloved Holy Prophet Muhammad (May Peace and Blessing of Allah be Upon Him). Tahir Selby, Imam of the Hartlepool Mosque, also mentioned the community work that has been carried out by

the Community members of Newcastle and Hartlepool. Few of the activities he mentioned includes Charity Walk, New year Cleaning, Poppy Collection, Food Donation and raising money for charities.

The first speaker for the day was Councillor Veronica Dunn, The Lord Mayor of Newcastle. She acknowledged the pervasive usage and extensive historical background of the word "peace." Councillor Dunn highlighted that peace finds application in both religious and civil contexts. Furthermore, she emphasized that peace could encompass a multitude of interpretations and hold various meanings.

The second speaker was the Worshipful Mayor of Gateshead Councillor Eileen McMaster. She mentioned that the positive peace is defined as the attitudes, institutions and structures that creates and sustains a peaceful society. It provides framework to understand and address the multiple and complex challenges the world faces. She also mentioned that she wants to pay tribute to the Ahmadiyya Muslim community as their works highlights the importance of coming together to create a stronger and more inclusive community which promotes understanding and harmony.

The third speaker of the day was Councillor Karen Overbury, the Mayor of Ponteland. She emphasized the importance of conveying to our children that while happiness may fluctuate, peace should endure. Councillor Overbury quoted Mother Teresa, stating that "Peace begins with a smile," and urged everyone to dedicate time to teach their children this valuable lesson. She emphasized that we cannot expect true peace within ourselves, our villages, our communities, or our nation if we overlook the needs of our children. Therefore, it is essential to both love and educate our children, guiding them on the path towards peace.



The closing speech was delivered by Imam Ata ul Mujeeb Rashed, who holds the positions of Imam of the London Mosque and Missionary Incharge UK. He began his address by expressing his appreciation for the insightful contributions of the guests and commending the concise yet impactful speeches delivered by the Mayors. Throughout his speech, he emphasized several crucial points necessary for the attainment of peace.

The Imam underscored the importance of cultivating peace within one's own family. He emphasized the value of children respecting their parents and parents exhibiting kindness towards their children. Islam teaches the establishment of a society founded on equality, love, affection, and kindness between parents and children. Furthermore, he highlighted the importance of maintaining an equitable relationship between spouses, where both partners equally care for each other. He cited a quote from Prophet Muhammad Ahmad (May Peace and Blessing of Allah be Upon Him) stating, "The best among you are the best to their families, and I am the best to my family."

The Imam also discussed the teachings of Islam concerning the rights of neighbours, referring to the words of the Holy Prophet (May Peace and Blessing of Allah be Upon Him), who stated that "He who sleeps full while his neighbour is hungry does not believe in me, while he knows about it." Fulfilling the rights of neighbours

holds significant importance in fostering peace within society. The Imam also reminded the audience that it is the duty of Muslims to show kindness to all individuals without discrimination based on religion, as this is essential for establishing peace.

Furthermore, he expressed that global peace can be achieved when nations fulfil their respective roles. Powerful nations should refrain from interfering in the affairs of smaller nations, contributing to a more peaceful world order.

Imam Ata ul Mujeeb Rashed answered questions from the audience after his speech. The questions were regarding the Women rights in Islam, the difference of beliefs between Ahmadiyya and other Muslims, Concept of Jihad and the Institution of Khilafat.

The Conference formally ended with a Silent Prayer led by Imam Ata ul Mujeeb Rashed.

A Quran exhibition was setup where several translations of the Holy Quran were on display. There was also a stall where the literature published by the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was displayed. Many guests visited the exhibition and the stall, Imam Tahir Selby answered any questions they had and distributed leaflets and books to the guests. The event concluded with dinner.

Report prepared by Abid Ahmad.

Ahmadiyya International Football Tournament 2023 held in UK



The Majlis-e-Sehat UK had the honour of hosting its first Ahmadiyya International Football Tournament in London, from 11 to 14 May 2023. The tournament's preparations began as early as January, with countries receiving their invitation letters and the formation of a dedicated management team. This team, led by Mirza Abdul Rasheed Sahib, Sadr Majlis-e-Sehat UK, worked tirelessly to ensure the tournament's successful execution.

The tournament kicked off on 11 May with an opening ceremony and a special dinner to extend a warm welcome to all participating teams. Presiding over the ceremony was Rafiq Ahmad Hayat Sahib, Amir Jamaat-e-Ahmadiyya UK. This gathering also served to decide the group formations through a draw. The tournament saw broad representation, with 12 countries and 19 teams participating, culminating in approximately 400 registered players. The names of the teams were as follows:

1. Al Furqan UK	2. Australia	3. Belgium	4. Canada A	5. Canada B
6. Fazle Umar UK	7. France	8. Germany A	9. Germany B	10. Holland
11. Ireland	12. Jamia Canada	13. Jamia Germany	14. Jamia UK	15. PAAMA Stars
16. Spain	17. Sweden	18. UK	19. USA	

From Friday to Saturday evening, a total of 30 group matches were conducted, followed by the commencement of the knock-out stage. This stage comprised seven matches, including the finals held on Sunday at Waverly School, adjacent to Islamabad, UK.

In order to maintain up-to-the-minute updates on fixtures and scores, the organisers utilised an online app, ensuring everyone was kept well-informed. On Friday, arrangements were made for all teams to watch the live Friday Sermon of Hazrat Khalifatul Masih V^{aa} and offer Jumuah, with some teams given the opportunity to offer Jumuah behind Huzoor^{aa} at Islamabad, UK. The tournament also provided players with the unique opportunity to listen to the address given by Huzoor^{aa} at the Jamia Ahmadiyya UK Convocation.

The final match was held on Sunday afternoon and broadcast

live on Majlis-e-Sehat UK's YouTube channel, courtesy of MTA International. To date, the match has garnered the attention of 9,000 viewers. The team "Germany A" emerged as the victorious winner of the tournament.

One of the most notable highlights of the tournament was the cherished opportunity for all teams to have photographs taken with beloved Huzoor^{aa}, a session that took place after the finals at Islamabad.

The final session took place after Asr prayer at Islamabad, which brought the tournament to a conclusion.

Report prepared by Mujeeb Ahmed Mirza, Secretary Majlis-e-Sehat, UK

Report: 12th T20 International Masroor Cricket Tournament

On Monday 29th May 2023, twenty teams from fourteen countries across the globe came to London for the 12th International Masroor T20 Cricket Tournament organised by Majlis-e-Sehat UK. 55 matches were played across 4 venues in London including the two brand new grounds at Barnes and Chiswick. The final took place on Saturday 3rd June 2023 at the Abbey Recreation Ground and Nursery Road Playing Field.

The tournament was initiated by Hazrat Mirza Masroor Ahmad (aba) back in 2009 as part of the Khilafat Centenary celebrations of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Association.

Preparations for this tournament started in January when 36 countries were sent invitation letters and sponsor letters to help them acquire any visas needed for travel to the UK.

The management team worked diligently and very hard to deliver the tournament successfully.

The tournament inauguration took place on 29th May 2023 followed by a special dinner to welcome the teams to the tournament. The inauguration was presided over by respected Amir Sahib Jamaat UK. As part of the inauguration, Amir sahib drew teams out of a hat to determine the groups. The groups and teams were:



12th International Masroor Twenty20 Cricket Tournament 2023 29th May – 4th June 2023

Group Seeding

<u>GROUP A</u>	<u>GROUP B</u>	<u>GROUP C</u>	<u>GROUP D</u>
CANADA	GERMANY	USA	UNITED KINGDOM
AMJ XI	UNITED KINGDOM (A)	AUSTRALIA	OMAIR XI
USA (A)	CANADA (A)	NETHERLANDS	JAMIA UK
SWEDEN	PAAMA	FRANCE	BELGIUM
NEW ZEALAND	ITALY	SWITZERLAND	NORWAY
			SPAIN

A total of 16 fixtures were played on day one across various venues in Morden, Chiswick and Barnes. Thankfully for the organizers and teams the weather held up beautifully with sunshine throughout the day and hardly any sign of rain. Cricket was played and enjoyed throughout the day with the blessing of congregational prayers also being a key feature for the participants.

Besides the cricket itself, Majlis-e-Sehat UK ensured that the spiritual essence of the tournament was upheld. The teams participating in this tournament in the United Kingdom made the effort to attend primarily in an attempt to gain nearness to Hazrat Ameer ul Momineen (aba), the cricket was secondary pursuit. Historically, matches were held on Fridays to accommodate intense fixture scheduling, however this year the Friday during the tournament was specifically allocated as a rest day in order for all teams to offer their Friday prayers behind Hazoor (aba). This allowed the players to offer their Juma prayers with a total ease of mind and prepare for the prayers accordingly without the hassle of intertwining fixtures on the day. Initially, the plan was to attend Friday prayers behind

Hazoor (aba) with transport being provided to the players to travel to Islamabad, however, Hazoor (aba) graciously decided to lead the Juma prayers in Baitul Futuh due to the half term holidays and this gave an opportunity for the players and a larger attendance of local Ahmadiis to pray behind their beloved Imam.

On a lighter note, the participants of the tournament were also entertained with an evening of 'Musha'irah' (spoken poetry) with the engaging poetry of respected Mubarak Siddiqi sahib, a poet known for expressing the realistic and challenging situations of life in a brilliant light-hearted manner relatable for all.

During the period of 4 days of rigorous T20 cricket these 20 teams battled it out in an attempt to be crowned the champions of T20 cricket of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community. Through valiant efforts of players and their management, UK's two teams, Canada, USA's two teams, Germany, Australia and Omair XI advanced towards the cup knockout rounds. The Quarter finals were played on Thursday the 1st of June, in which the UK first XI, Canada, Germany



and Australia edged through into the last 4 of the tournament.

The standard of cricket played throughout the tournament was exceptionally high, the teams advancing into the semis were composed of thoroughly experienced cricketers who have honed their art playing top-level cricket in their country of residence, with some also having played close to professional standard cricket in Pakistan before migrating to their new adopted homes across Europe, America and Australia.

Rafay Ahmed (Bahawalpur and Lahore Qalandars Academy), Yasir Mehmood (Canada u19), Zulfiqar Salahuddin (Western Australia BBL) and Muneeb Mabashir (Sindh, Bahawalpur) were some of the highly accomplished cricketers on display for this standard of amateur cricket, enhancing the quality of the cricket on display for their teams. All four top qualifying teams possessed a squad of cricketers who have all played premier or top standard cricket for domestic amateur league cricket. It was this experience, the meeting of high fitness levels and mental strength that enabled these teams to advance into the final 4 of the coveted and prestigious Masroor T20 Cricket Tournament!

The Grand Final

(UK v Germany)

The two best sides of the tournament were now about to lock horns for the final act of the tournament. Germany won the toss and their captain Muddaser Muhammad had no hesitation in opting to bat first, with the view of putting runs on the board being the way to go. The start was ideal for the visiting side, as the opener Zeeshan Ahmed Baloch came out with serious intent scoring 30 off 14 (strike rate 214) and hitting four monster sixes to stun the UK bowlers and giving UK captain Shakir Ahmed much to think about. Post powerplay, the UK bowlers were able to pull things back for themselves, with a good spell from the experienced campaigner Abdul Qadir bowling an excellent 24 deliveries that only went for 16 runs, with 12 dot balls and 3 big German wickets in the process. Solid contributions from Tayyab Goraya (32 off 23) and Faisal Bin Mobashir (42* off 38), and small impactful innings by the German lower order helped the visitors put on a strong total of 180-7 in their 20 overs.

Similar to the German openers, the UK side were equally as good in their first 6 overs of the chase scoring 57-1, with opener Rafay Ahmed and wicket keeper/batsman Harawal Wassam playing exquisite cricket shots all around the park and not taking any unnecessary risks. With the score at 82-1 in 9.4 overs, the UK side was on course to chase down the total with two set batsmen at the crease. With nothing really happening for the German bowlers, Germany bowler Zeeshan Baloch cleverly sniffed an opportunity to run out the inform Rafay Ahmed who was caught backing up too much at the non-striker's end, bringing into the equation the infamous Mankad rule and opening up a wide debate on 'Morals of the game versus the rules of the game'. Legally, Rafay Ahmed (31 off 28) had to go and the UK side was left to chase the last 100 runs without their premier batsman. Soon to fall was Harawal Wassam (46 off 37) taking on the fielders once too many times resulting in the 3rd run out of the innings. With the required run rate creeping up, UK's last hope was the dangerous power-hitter Safwan Manzoor, who was given a chance early on in his innings being dropped on the boundary. This drop catch could have proved hugely costly as Safwan threatened to take the game away with 4 thunderous clean strikes for 6 and shifting the momentum of the chase back in UK's favour. Unfortunately for the UK, it was the experience on Nasir Basra that came to the fore when he trapped Safwan LBW bang in front of the stumps for the killer blow to UK's chase. Safwan fell for 34 off 17 and so ended UK's chance to reach the total with pacer Shams ul Zaman delivering a masterclass of in the 'block-hole' (Not 'Black hole' as mentioned by the excited Urdu commentator) bowling. Shams picked up 3 wickets for 8 runs in his two overs to close out the innings with the UK side being bowled out for 148 in 18.4 overs. A huge 32 run victory meant that the Germany side that was the inaugural winners of the Masroor International Cricket tournament once again lifted the trophy after a break of 11 years to become two-time world champions of the tournament!

To ensure that everyone was kept up to date with the fixtures and scores, the organisers used an online scoring app to keep everyone informed.

The final session took place right after the match and was chaired by respected Amir Sahib Jamaat UK. Individual and teams performances were as follows:



Man of the Plate Final Match:	Shakoor Ahmad (Canada A)
Man of the 3rd Position Match:	Asad Waseem (Australia)
Man of the Final Match:	Shams ul Zaman (Germany)
Best Batsman of The Tournament:	Zulfiqar Salahuddin Butt (Australia) scored total 384 runs and his highest was 155 not out.
Best Bowler of the Tournament:	Usman Tahir (United Kingdom) he took total 15 Wickets
Best Fielder of the Tournament:	Rafey Ahmad (United Kingdom) he took 8 catches and 1 indirect Run out.
Best Wicket Keeper of the Tournament:	Husnan Kabeer (Germany) he took 5 Wicket keepers catches, 1 Stump and 2 Run outs.
Veteran of the Tournament:	Syed Anwar Ahmad (Norway) he is 67 Year old most senior Player of the tournament and he took 7 Wickets in this Tournament.
Player of the Tournament:	Rafey Ahmad (United Kingdom) he scored 303 run with the bat and took 14 Wickets and 8 catches.
Plate Tournament Runners Up:	AMJ XI
Plate Tournament Runners Up:	AMJ XI
Plate Tournament Winner:	CANADA (A)
3rd Position:	AUSTRALIA
Runners Up:	UNITED KINGDOM
Champions:	GERMANY

Finally, the participants were rewarded for their attendance in this year's tournament with a blessed opportunity of having a team

photo with beloved Hazoor-e-Anwar (aba) on Sunday, 4th June 2023 afternoon after Zuhr prayers and lunch in Islamabad.

North East Networking and Careers Fair



This regional event was held on Sunday 11th June 2023 from 11am to 2pm, at Al Mahdi mosque in Bradford. After Tilawat, a welcome address was given by Dr Mohammed Iqbal, Naib Regional Amir, North East, who stated the purpose of the event was to educate students on possible career paths as well as to meet and network with professionals in the Jama'at.

The National Secretary Sanato Tijarat, Ahmad Salam Sahib (son of Professor Abdus Salam) gave an introductory speech. He stated that it is very important to give your child your time. Professor Salam's father used to spend a lot of time with his son when he returned from school. He would go through what he had learnt at school that day and also help him prepare for the next day's lessons. This is how Professor Salam was able to get ahead of other students and excel academically. Similarly, Ch. Muhammad Zafarullah Khan Sahib, used to have breakfast with Professor Salam every Sunday (when they were both in London) and mentor him. So, both these examples show how we can prepare and mentor our children to achieve a successful career.

Next, Maulana Mubarak Basra, Regional Missionary gave the first talk about training as a missionary and the 7 years training at Jamia.

After this there were several presentations given by professional in their fields. PowerPoint slides were projected and they covered; A-level grades required for entry at university, starting salaries,

pros and cons of the profession, as well as many other points. The presentations given were:

- Teaching by Sobia Mir
- Postgraduate qualifications by Mufleha Ahmad
- Finance by Waqaas Anwar
- Medicine by Dr Luqman Ahmed
- Optometry by Irrej Rubani
- Pharmacy by Madheea Iqbal
- The Armed Forces by Ziaullah Mir
- An Electrician by Muhammad Munawar
- Engineering by Dr Abid Ahmad
- Marketing by Amer Iqbal
- Law by Fraz Ahmad
- The IT & Corporate Sector by Dr Mohammed Iqbal

After all the presentations, a Question & Answer session followed. The event concluded with a silent prayer, Zuhr Prayers and then lunch. The total attendance was around 100 men and women.

Report prepared by Abid Ahmad.

Visit of American Students To Fazl Mosque

Report by Daniyal Ahmad, UK Missionary



After a long interval due to Covid, on 27th March 2023, after Zuhr prayer a group of American students along with Professor Mike Fosdal visited the Fazl Mosque. The group consisted of 13 students and all of them were from different States of USA. Their purpose of visit was to understand more about Islam in Britain.

After their arrival, respected Imam Ataul Mujeeb Rashed Sahib received all of them and took them inside the mosque. Then he gave them a brief introduction about Islam and its teachings, Mosque, offering prayer, Qibla and that how the Ahmadi Lajna donated their ornaments for the building of Fazl mosque etc. After this, it was followed by a question and answer session. Questions regarding having more than one wife, Sunni and Shia, jihad etc were asked. The background of the Ahmadiyya Muslim Community was also

explained. This session was about 30 minutes long.

After this, refreshments were presented for them. Once again different questions related to Islam were asked from respected Imam Ataul Mujeeb Rashed Sahib.

In total, they spent about 2 hours.

One of the students gave the impression in the following words:

“We gained better insight into the beliefs of Islam and its core values. We became more familiar with a community different from our own, which was beneficial.”

New Comers Event



By the grace of Allah, Jamaat UK (Baitul Fatuh Region) successfully organised an event to welcome newcomers on 1st July in Tahir hall, Baitul Futuh. This was a new initiative to help our members integrate and meet the local Jamaats.

Newcomers to the Jamaat included those who had come to the UK in the past couple of years including students and others who have applied for asylum.

In total over 550 guests attended this event, Alhamdulillah, alongside a number of jamaat officeholders. A number of desks were set up in the Nasir hall where representatives of Umoore ama, Rishta Nata, Homeopathy, Legal advisors, medical advisors and career advisors were on hand to assist the members.

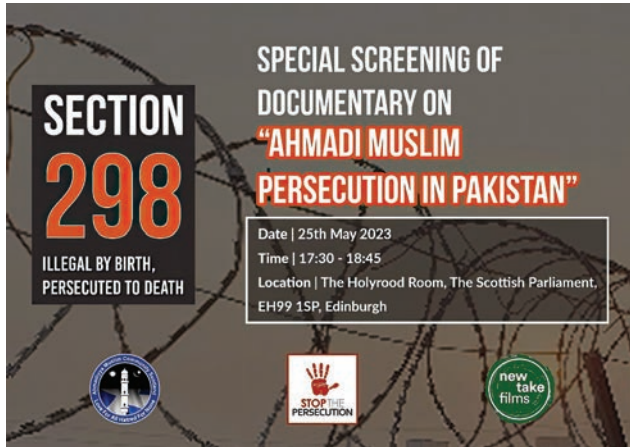
The event was presided by respected Ameer sahib UK and he also hosted a Question and Answer session for the guests. Respected Ameer sahib emphasised on the obedience to Khilafat and Nizame Jamaat. He also spoke about the services that Jamaat offers and the role of Regional Ameers and Presidents.

Respected Ameer sahib advised all Presidents and Regional Ameers that they should look after all new comers in their areas. Transport should be provided for Jamaat events and homemade food should be provided to those who are in temporary accommodation if necessary.

Report prepared by Mubarak Ahmed Siddiqi.



Scottish Ahmadi Muslims Gather at The Scottish Parliament to Raise Awareness of Persecution in Pakistan



Scottish Ahmadi Muslims united at the Scottish Parliament Edinburgh on May 25th for a compelling event aimed at shedding light on the persecution faced by Ahmadi Muslims and other minority communities in Pakistan. The event, hosted by Clare Adamson, Member of the Scottish Parliament for Motherwell and Wishaw, drew a diverse audience of 90 attendees, including Scottish Parliament members, Faith leaders, Politicians, Interfaith Scotland & Rotary Club Scotland representatives, students, and doctors. Jama'at Scotland used social media effectively to raise awareness of the program well in advance where many politicians liked and endorse our posts and the message was delivered to thousands in this way.

The event served as a platform to raise awareness about the denial of freedom of religion and the human rights violations of Ahmadi Muslims and other minority religious communities in Pakistan. The

program started at 5:30 pm with a recitation of the Holy Quran with English translation followed by a short introduction video about Islam Ahmadiyyat.

"We are grateful for the overwhelming support shown by the attendees and the Scottish community in highlighting the persecution of Ahmadi Muslims and other minorities in Pakistan. It is essential that we continue to raise awareness, engage in meaningful dialogue, and work together to safeguard religious freedom and human rights for all," said Clare Adamson MSP who was the host of this program.

The highlight of the event was the screening of the impactful short documentary titled 'Section 298.' This powerful film provided a poignant glimpse into the harsh realities of life under Pakistan's deadliest law, Section 298, which forms part of the country's blasphemy laws. Explicitly targeting Ahmadi Muslims, this law





legitimises their persecution and imprisonment.

The screening was followed by an expert panel discussion that delved into the specific challenges faced by Ahmadi Muslims and the wider impact on other minority communities, including Shias, Christians, and Hindus. The panel included Mr Fareed Ahmad, national secretary external affairs Ahmadiyya Muslim Community UK, Clare Adamson MSP, councillor Gordon Pryde and Dr Abdul Hayee Regional Ameer of Scotland. A variety of questions were asked by the audience about this cruel law in Pakistan and the panel responded in detail.

Closing remarks delivered by Dr Abdul Hayee Regional Ameer sahib, thanked everyone who attended this informative session and the Scottish Government who provides a safe shelter to those affected by this law in Pakistan. The program concluded with a silent prayer by Quraishi Daud Ahmad missionary of Edinburgh and refreshments, tea and coffee were served to the guests. Later on, many guests and politicians used social media and showed their support for those who have been affected by this law in Pakistan and said that the program was quite informative.

Report prepared by Abid Ahmad



Medical Matters - Mental Health and its importance

By Dr Yaseen Sumyaan Ahmad working in Urology & General Surgery at Scunthorpe General Hospital



Mental health refers to a person's overall psychological well-being. It includes emotional, social and cognitive aspects of an individual's life. Good mental health means that a person is able to cope with the daily challenges of their life and has the ability to work productively and contribute to society. However, poor mental health can lead to a range of problems, such as the feeling of not being valued by society, depression, anxiety and substance abuse.



Mental health is an important issue that affects people of all ages and backgrounds. It is estimated that one in four people in the world will experience mental health problems at some point in their lives. Mental health issues can have a significant impact on a person's quality of life, as well as their relationships with others.

There are several factors that can contribute to poor mental health. These can include genetic factors, environmental factors and life experiences. Stressful life events such as the loss of a loved one, a job loss or financial difficulties can all contribute to poor mental health.

It is important to seek help if you are struggling with your mental health. There are several resources available to people who are experiencing mental health problems. These can often include therapy, counselling, medications and support groups.

Our beloved Khalifa (may Allah be His helper) has particularly emphasised prayer and reaching out to God Almighty for help with one's struggles and the feeling of loneliness. Prayer and meditation can reduce stress and can also help you learn how to deal with anxiety when you feel your stress levels rising. Such anxious thoughts can make you feel as though you have no control over your emotions, whereas through prayer, one develops a feeling of peace and security. The Holy Quran even says in Surah Ar Ra'd that surely the remembrance of Allah brings peace to the heart.

Counselling and therapy are common Western treatments for mental health problems. There are several types of therapy, including cognitive-behavioural therapy, interpersonal therapy and psychodynamic therapy.

Medications can also be an effective treatment for mental health problems. There are several types of medications that can be used to treat mental health issues, including antidepressants, anti-anxiety medications, and anti-psychotic medications.

Support groups can also be helpful for people who are experiencing mental health problems. These groups provide a safe and supportive environment for people to share their experiences and receive support from others who are going through similar challenges.

There are also several actions that people can do to promote good mental health. These can include getting regular exercise, eating a healthy diet and getting enough sleep. It is also important to seek help if you are struggling with your mental health, and to talk to someone you trust, such as a family member or a close friend, about your feelings and concerns.

Post natal depression is one form of depression which is often overlooked but can be very common. This is where you develop depression after having a baby due to physical and psychological stress. To spot if you may have a general mental illness, there are usually 5 warning signs. They are: changes in personality, changes in emotion, isolation, sudden absence of self-care and a sense of hopelessness or feeling overwhelmed. These can also be potential warning signs of suicide if not properly dealt with so if you ever feel like such, please contact your GP for further help and support.

In conclusion, mental health is an important issue that affects people of all ages. It is important to seek help from your GP or at least tell a loved one if you are struggling with your mental health and to take steps to promote good mental well-being. With the right treatment and support, it is very much possible to manage such mental health problems and lead a fulfilling life.

ORIGINS OF WESTERN CULTURE

By Dr Mohammed Iqbal - Producer and Host of Living History - Voice of Islam Radio



"Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth. Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled. Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."
[Matthew; 5: 3-9]

"Britain yields gold, silver and other metals, to make it worth conquering." [Tacitus (55-120 AD)]

"We, the last men on earth, the last of the free, have been shielded till today by the very remoteness and the seclusion for which we are famed...[But], brigands of the world [the Romans] have exhausted the land by their indiscriminate plunder; and now they ransack the sea. The wealth of an enemy excites their cupidity, his poverty their lust of power. East and West have failed to glut their maw. They are unique in being as violently tempted to attack the poor as the wealthy. Robbery, butchery, rapine, the liars call Empire; they create a desolation and call it peace"

[Speech attributed to a British leader by Tacitus]

*What are the origins of Western culture?
How different was Roman culture from Greek culture?
How did the Jews in Palestine respond to the Romans?
Who was Jesus and why did the Jews want him crucified?
How did a "weak" Palestinian culture replace a "powerful" Roman culture?*

Western civilisation has been the most dominant civilisation across most of the planet over the last few hundred years. Even in the twenty first century, wherever one goes, the middle classes from countries as diverse as India, China, Russia, Turkey and Japan want to have the standard and style of life of those in the West. To an outsider or a newcomer this civilization is defined by a high standard of living, democracy and a free-market consumer led society that has an almost blind faith in the process of "change". It frowns upon the past and has its eyes firmly set on a future of its own making. So, what are the origins on Western culture, and how did it reach this dominant position?

Western culture is a fusion of a resilient Palestinian culture (that had seen-off many great ancient cultures) with two of the greatest cultures the world has known, the ancient Greek and Roman cultures. Whilst the Palestinian culture of Jesus has played a prominent role in shaping Western culture since the adoption of Christianity as state religion by the Roman Emperor Constantine (see later), its influence

has declined markedly since the period of European Enlightenment (see later). Few would deny that true Christians-those who follow Christ both in word and deed-are small in number in much of the West, and certainly not in command of society as a whole (I acknowledge the same could be said for Muslims). Although most people still take great pride in their cultural heritage, the majority of the population, especially in protestant countries, openly declare their agnosticism or total disbelief in God and mock the church and religion generally. Indeed, if Jesus was to find himself in England, today he would not see much of his Palestinian heritage. I suspect, Zeus from mount Olympus, would feel more at home than Jesus.

Jesus gets a rough ride in our "soap" culture and he is treated with little respect by the literary establishment. Take for example the following quote from Robert Harris in the *Spectator* writing about John Patten, a Member of Parliament in the Conservative Party, who under fire from the media had said that he did not mind what anybody wrote about him:

"He is a grovelling, cringing, truckling, bumsucking, fawning, sycophantic, ingratiating, toadying, creeping Jesus [emphasis added], who should be removed from office at the first opportunity. (Quoted in Independent on Sunday 3rd April 1994 p21)

Since Westminster and much of the Establishment prides more in the Greco-Roman legacy than Jesus' it would have been fairer to write "creeping Zeus" or "creeping Caesar" than to drag Jesus into the sewers of Westminster. It seems that the media in its frenzy forgets all good advice, including "render unto Caesar what is Caesar's and unto God what is His". Whilst acknowledging that a free-press and freedom of thought and expression are important principles to uphold, it is regrettable that the moral and philosophical high ground for which so many great people in the West gave their lives is being lost at an increasing pace.

To understand the mind of the dominant Western culture, the way it behaves, the way it thinks and the attitude it has towards others, we need to go back to the Greek and Roman civilisation.

No nation in the history of mankind has been so admired, so glorified, indeed so blindly revered as the Greek. Until the nineteenth century, leading writers and scholars held up Greek history and culture as examples to be copied by humanity as a whole. In the modern world, in every area of life, from names of the planets in the heavens to those of spaceships and rockets, in the designs of the latest architecture, in popular drama, in common ideas of politics and philosophy, not to mention the names of the common diseases, the ancient Greeks continue to influence Western civilisation. From Hollywood epics

to high philosophy their influences have never been more seductive and widespread than in contemporary culture.

Since the Greeks only began to record their history around 500BC it is through archaeological research and Homer's two great epic poems, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* that we are able to form some sort of picture of the "Dark Age" before the dawn of the *polis* or "city state" and democracy. Homer's *Iliad* gives an account of a short episode from a legendary long-past war; the *Odyssey* is more like a novel, narrating the adventures of one of the greatest of all literary characters, Odysseus, on his way home from the same struggle. These poems, however, were to be much more than just poems *"they came to be held to be something like sacred books....Thus they became not only the first documents of Greek self-consciousness, but the embodiment of the fundamental values of classical civilisation. Later they were to be even more than this: together with the Bible, they are the source of western literature"* (Roberts :p181)

The roots of Greek culture are described in a colourful myth in which a Phoenician princess, Europa, was abducted by Zeus-chief of the Greek gods. Disguising himself as a tame bull, he surprised her while she was playing on the beach and carried her off to Crete, and from the courtship, Europa brings into the world King Minos, and the Minoan civilisation of our historical and archaeological records. The truth behind this legend was probably well-known to every Greek in Homer's time-it meant that the roots of his culture were to be found in the Middle East (See section Adam's Paradise). Indeed if it wasn't for the invention of writing in Sumeria and later through the input of the Babylonians the measurement of time into the 24 hour day, the seven day week and twelve month year, civilization in Crete, Greece and elsewhere may well have taken a different turn.

Religion in Homer, in the modern sense, is not very inspiring .The gods differed from men only in being immortal and possessing supernatural powers. It is difficult to see how they can have inspired much awe amongst the intelligentsia, and clearly they didn't. Most Greeks, however, lived in cocoons of traditional irrationality and superstition. A continuing respect was shown to the old public orthodoxies. It was impiety in late fifth-century Athens, for example, to deny belief in the gods, and to challenge orthodoxy. Socrates, the archetypal figure of the man of intellect, offended the pieties of the state and paid with his life for corrupting the young.

Greek religion as represented in Homer appears enormously complex by today's standards. Many modern writers, however, have come to the conclusion that Homer, far from being primitive, was a moderniser, a kind of eighteenth century rationaliser of ancient myths, holding up an upper-class ideal of urbane enlightenment. Greek mythology and art usually presents its gods as better, or worse, men and women, a world away from the monsters of Assyria and Babylonia. This was a religious revolution; for it implied that men could be godlike. The converse was also true that gods were like humans with supernatural powers.

Mount Olympus was the command centre of the gods and Zeus was the chief Olympian, a splendid sky god who compelled the clouds, brought rain, and wielded his thunderbolt. His consort was Hera, though he had other wives and consorts with whom he dallied in many shapes and forms. Hera was his permanent wife, who looked after the affairs of the women and was the protectress of marriage. Other important deities were Poseidon, the sea god, Hades, god of the underworld, Aphrodite, the goddess of love, and Athena, the patroness of the city of Athens. A god of uncertain origin but great influence was Apollo, the patron of music, healing, prophecy and the god of the important shrine of Delphi. The Olympians provided a sort of national cohesion and meaning, but each city-state had its own shrines and gods.

The Homeric gods were also the gods of a conquering aristocracy, not the useful fertility gods of those who actually tilled the soil, as in many other ancient cultures. Gilbert Murray comments:

"The gods of most nations claim to have created the world. The Olympians make no such claim. The most they ever did was to conquer it....And when they have conquered their kingdoms, what do they do? Do they attend to the government? Do they promote agriculture? Do they practice trades and industries? Not a bit of it. Why should they do any honest work? They find it easier to live on the revenues and blast with thunderbolts the people who do not pay. They are conquering chieftains, royal buccaneers. They fight, and feast, and play, and make music; they drink deep, and roar with laughter at the lame smith who waits on them. They are never afraid, except of their own king. They never tell lies, except in love and war".(Five Stages of Greek Religion p67) in RUSSEL.p32.

Though the Greeks distinguished sharply between gods and humans, there was nevertheless a kind of transitional being or demigod who was important for cities, for families and sometimes for all Greeks: the hero, who had attained a legendary status such as Achilles or Hercules. At any rate the heroes, though not divine, were nearer to the gods than other human beings; many were thought to be the offspring of gods, and some attained immortality.

The Greek was concerned with "face": his culture taught him to avoid shame rather than guilt and the fear of shame was never far from the fear of public evidence of guilt. To this day a man's standing in his peers' eyes is what is cared about by many Greeks more than anything else. The Greeks admired men who won and thought all men should strive to win. Achilles, as Homer presents him, was a proud warrior, but was as prickly and touchy a fellow as any medieval baron. Homer's hero, Odysseus, frequently behaved like a rogue, but he is brave and clever and he succeeds; he is therefore admirable.

To the Greeks eternal youth, beauty and sex were divine privileges, and physical education of men and young boys took pride of place. In the gymnasias, the statues of Hermes, the messenger of the gods, and of Hercules flanked a statue of Eros. Here adults would



Poseidon-sea god



Greece at war



Greek temple



Plato & Aristotle

come to watch youths at their exercises. The pupils were naked, for the Greeks considered the Oriental's reluctance to bare bodies a clear sign of barbarism. The Greeks, moreover, favoured erotic relationships, the sexually explicit poses on vases and in the figures should not be forgotten, and homosexuality was not frowned upon. In fact, sex in Greek culture was riotous at all times. Olympian gods coupled freely with mortals and the zoomorphic nature of Greek divinity encouraged, not inhibited, coupling between gods and animals. Zeus, the top-god, was never one to miss an opportunity. He seduced the beautiful Leda, appearing as a swan, he took Europa as a bull, he took the beautiful and faithful Alcmena by assuming the shape and appearance of her husband Amphitryon and so on.

Early Greek history was marked by wars, pillage and genocide. However, as some peace and order descended, the "city states" began to emerge, and gradually powerful cities began to absorb their neighbours; the foremost of these were Athens and Sparta. By around 500 BC Athens had gained control of the whole of Attica and she was becoming the cultural centre of the *Hellenic* world and the most powerful state in central Greece, a fact which greatly displeased its rival Sparta.

Greek warriors and aristocrats like their self-indulgent and domineering gods took what was theirs and even that which wasn't theirs if and when they wanted. According to the Greek historian Thucydides when Lesbos rebelled against Athenian domination the leaders of the rebellion were executed and the inhabitants turned into plantation serfs. Some twelve years later (416 BC) the Athenians goaded the inhabitants of the free island of Melos into rebellion and then descended upon them with 38 warships and 2,700 infantry. Before beginning the attack they sent ambassadors to the Melians to persuade them to submit without fighting. The following revealing debate ensued:

Athenian: *We propose now to demonstrate, first, that we have come in the interest of our Empire and, secondly, that the arguments which we shall expound are conducive to the salvation of your country. We wish to avoid trouble in imposing our Empire upon you and to consult our mutual interests by saving you from destruction.*

Melian: *It may be in your interest to impose your Empire, but how can it be in ours to submit to slavery?*

Athenian: *Because you would gain the advantage of submitting before suffering the ultima ratio, while we should profit by not having destroyed you....The stakes are not honor but salvation, and the problem is to avoid resistance to an adversary who utterly outmatches you*

(Toynbee, Arnold J. (Ed trans.) Greek Civilization and Character. Boston 1950. pp145-147)

The Melians, chose to fight, with the following outcome: *"The Athenians used their discretion to put to death all Melian prisoners of military age and to sell the women and children into slavery. They afterward colonized the place themselves with five hundred Athenian settlers"* (ibid p151)

Imperialism was genuinely popular among Athenians who would expect to share its profits, even if only indirectly and collectively, and not to have to bear its burdens. This was not much different from the later European "nation-state" empires, as were the associated criticisms. *"Commerce, the navy, ideological confidence and democracy", writes Roberts (p200) "are themes as inseparably and traditionally interwoven in the history of fifth-century Athens as*

of late nineteenth-century England..."

The imperial and mythological heritage of ancient Greece was not altogether satisfying for a large number of the educated sections of Greek society, and so other currents of social and religious experience were making inroads. For many the cults of Dionysus, Orphism, and the Eleusinian mysteries, provided a personal dimension. The great dramatic writers, especially Aeschylus, and the philosophers, notably, Plato (429?-347BC), sought to reinterpret or to purify the traditional mythology. In the *Republic* and elsewhere Plato was severely critical of Homeric mythology. He thought traditional tales of the gods ought to be censored, since they often gave a far from inspiring or flattering picture of the deities and corrupted the youth.

Prior to Plato, there were connections between religion and that activity which was known as the love of wisdom (the literal translation of the term *philosophia*) (p232 SMART). Most of these early Greek thinkers came from the Ionian city of Miletus in the seventh and sixth centuries BC. Important intellectual activity went on there and in other Ionian cities right down to the remarkable age of Athenian speculation which begins with Socrates. No doubt the stimulus of an Asian/Near Eastern background was important here as in so many other ways in getting things started; it may also have been significant that Miletus was a rich place; early thinkers seem to have been rich men who could afford the time to think. Later on the whole Greek world was involved in the success of the Greek mind, with astonishing achievements of Athenian scholars. Later, in the Hellenistic age, the primacy in intellectual activity passed onto Alexandria.

It was during the sixth century that Greek philosophy was also joined by science and mathematics. Pythagoras (570?-500 BC), the philosopher and religious thinker, who is better known for his contribution to mathematics, incorporated Orphic ideas into his teachings, such as belief in reincarnation, the need for purification. Pythagoras, was a native of the Island of Samos, near Miletus, later migrating to Croton, a Greek colony in south Italy, where he founded a "Brotherhood" and carried out much of his work. The Pythagorean message was a blend of theoretical, mathematical learning and practical spirituality which in the end are related to political action. This was to have a considerable influence on Plato.

Apart from Pythagoras, a number of Ionian thinkers, known as the Presocratics pioneered speculative thought. In the sixth century BC Ionian thinkers such as Thales and Anaxmander, set out a general view of the nature of the universe which replaced myth with impersonal explanation. They pushed aside gods and demons from the understanding of nature. In Athens Socrates (c.470-399 BC) stirred his contemporaries to reflect about moral and philosophical issues, asking questions like "What is courage?" Socrates left as a maxim the view that: *"the unexamined life is not worth living"*. He questioned received astronomy and much else for which he was sentenced to death. The teachings and methods of these men prepared the way for Plato.

Plato (429?-347 BC), who was by birth an aristocratic Athenian, turned away from the world of practical affairs in which he had hoped to take part, disillusioned with the politics of the Athenian democracy, and, in particular, with its treatment of Socrates. From Socrates he had learnt not only his Pythagoreanism but an idealist approach to ethical questions, and a technique of philosophical enquiry. Orphic concepts therefore passed onto Plato, who rehearsed the arguments for the immortality of the soul and reincarnation in the dialogue *Phaedo*. Professor Smart writes:

"He held that human souls were unable to retain their splendid original state of immortality and so sank down into bodies, to

wander through life from existence to existence. But knowledge enables them to rise again to a state of liberation. Knowledge involves knowing essences, which for Plato are defined by the Forms which earthly things imitate and participate in. The World of Forms is where the soul came from, so acquiring knowledge is really remembering. And this, according to Plato, is how Socrates' method of arousing thought managed to work" (SMART p232 W R)

Plato conceived of a timeless, eternal realm lying beyond the reach of the senses and culminating in the Form of the Good, giving unity and value to the lower Forms (Smart 322). The soul through knowledge can climb up to the Form of the Good and perceive it in a vision. Plato's intuition was thus both mystical and intellectual, and part of the rigorous training of the disciple had to be in mathematics. In his school in the grove known as Akademos (hence the words "academic" and "academy") he had written over the entrance the words *Medeis ageometros eisito*-*"Let no one ignorant of geometry enter here"*.

Platonism provided a noble and unified vision which could be set alongside the religion of the mysteries and the new movements, and, up to a point, alongside traditional religion and civic cults. Plato, however, was not only concerned with theory and vision but also with politics, and his *Republic* was the first book in which anyone had ever set out a scheme for society directed and planned to achieve an ethical goal. It describes an authoritarian state (reminiscent of Sparta) in which marriages would be regulated to produce the best genetic results, families and private property would not exist, culture and the arts would be censored and education carefully supervised. The few who ruled this state would be those of sufficient intellectual and moral stature to fit them for the studies which would enable them to the just society in practice by apprehending the Ideal world. Unlike his teacher, he held that for most people education and the laws should impose exactly that unexamined life which Socrates had thought not worth living. (Roberts 209)

Most of Plato's life was devoted to education and it was one of his students, Aristotle (384-322 BC), who took Plato's philosophy in a different direction. Plato anticipated almost all the great questions of philosophy and one twentieth-century philosopher put it, *"practically all subsequent philosophy in the West was a series of footnotes to Plato"* (Roberts p209). Whilst Plato's thoughts reflected some of his disgust and distaste for what he saw in Athenian society, in contrast the views of Aristotle were less adventurous but more balanced and comprehensive. He was a great classifier and collector of data and did not reject sense experience, as did Plato. Indeed, he sought both firm knowledge and happiness in the world of experience, rejecting the notion of universal ideas and arguing inductively from facts to general laws. Aristotle's analytical treatments of biology, psychology, physics, metaphysics, ethics, politics, and logic which were to have a profound effect on Muslim and later European thought. It is a vast achievement, different in kind but not less important than that of Plato. (Rob p209)

Although many other notable figures arose after Aristotle, none could match him in intellectual endeavours. However, a student of Aristotle made a name for himself in another field. Alexander the Great (365-323 BC) the son of Philip II, king of Macedonia, became one of the biggest empire builders the world has seen. In a series of brilliant campaigns, Alexander swept aside the mighty Persian Empire. Within a short period he laid the foundations of Greek-influenced regimes in Egypt, Syria (including Palestine), Persia, and Bactria in Central Asia. In Greece itself he brought to a close a turbulent but wonderfully creative period and ushered in the age which we know as *"Hellenistic"*.

Gone was the influence of the Greek city-states, which had already

been tamed by Philip II, Alexander was now the master over Greeks and non-Greeks. He was a brilliant planner and tactician but he could at times be cruel and unforgiving. Alexander and his successors founded many great cities such as Alexandria and Antioch, and refounded many more. The most famous of these was Alexandria, serving as the capital city (the world's first in the sense that we understand the word today) of the Ptolemaic kings of Egypt. For a century it remained a power-house of Greek-based Hellenic culture. It was here that Euclid wrote his *Elements*, for more than 2,000 years the text book of geometry.

Alexander extended the limits of the world in the true sense of the word, not only by his conquests but also by forging an intellectual bond that far transcended the bounds of state and race. The unified Hellenistic culture, which flourished for approximately 300 years from Alexander's death in 323 BC to the beginning of the Roman Empire in 30 BC, and which was continued in Graeco-Roman culture, embraced as many countries and people as the Roman Empire was to comprise in its heyday. From the Aegean to the Hindu Kush, from the Black Sea to the cataracts of the Nile, scholars and traders thought and wrote in Greek. Literature, science, city planning and the arts were given a quantitative and qualitative impulse as never again in the history of mankind. (Zieher p99)

Despite the positive contributions made by the Greeks to civilization as we know it, theirs was an insecure society, often marked by lust, violence, cynicism and anger, and their own writers reflected it with a high degree of accuracy. Many of Homer's human heroes, are not very dignified or well behaved. The case of Oedipus killing his father so as to marry his mother, suggests a pretty confused society. Even the leading family, the House of Pelops, did not succeed in setting a pattern of happy family life :

"Tantalos, the Asiatic founder of the dynasty, began its career by a direct offence against the gods; some said, by trying to cheat them into eating human flesh, that of his own son Pelops. Pelops, having been miraculously restored to life, offended in his turn. He won his famous chariot-race against Oinomaos, king of Pisa, by the connivance of the latter's charioteer, Myrtilos, and then got rid of his confederate, whom he had promised to reward, by flinging him into the sea. The curse descended to his sons, Atreus and Thyestes, in the form of what the Greeks called ate. A strong if not actually irresistible impulse to crime. Thyestes corrupted his brother's wife and thereby managed to steal the "luck" of the family, the famous golden-fleeced ram. Atreus in turn secured his brother's banishment, and recalling him under pretext of reconciliation, feasted him on the flesh of his own children. The curse was now inherited by Atreus' son Agamemnon, who offended Artemis by killing a sacred stag, sacrificed his own daughter Iphigenia to appease the goddess and obtain a safe passage to Troy for his fleet, and was in turn murdered by his faithless wife Klytaimnestra and her paramour Aigisthos, a surviving son of Thyestes. Orestes, Agamemnon's son, in turn avenged his father by killing his mother and Aigisthos" (Primitive Culture in Greece..H.J.Rose 1925,p193. RUSSEL P33.

It has to be said the attacks on Athenian culture and democracy have embodied as much historical mis-representation as have over-zealous and idealising defences of the same institutions. Roberts comments:

"When all is said, Athenian democracy must be respected above all for what it cradled, a series of cultural triumphs which are peaks even in the history of European and Middle Eastern civilization. The Greeks invented the philosophical question as part and parcel of one of the great intuitions of all time, that a coherent and logical explanation of things could be found, that the world did not ultimately rest upon the meaningless and arbitrary fiat of gods or

demons. Put like that, of course, it is not an attitude which could be or was grasped by all, or even most Greeks. It was an attitude which had to make its way in a world permeated with irrationality and superstition....even Plato, who thought it impossible that most men could share it, gave to the rulers of his ideal state the task of rational reflection as the justification both of their privileges and of the discipline laid upon them. If civilization is advance towards the control of mentality and environment by reason, then the Greeks did more for it than any of their predecessors". (Roberts p203)



Alexander the Great



Rome



Julius Caesar



Gladiators

If the Greek contribution to civilization through their great thinkers was mental and spiritual, that of Rome was structural and practical; its essence was the empire itself. The visible relics of Roman technical accomplishment were diffused over an area running from the Black Sea to Hadrian's Wall in the north and the Atlas Mountains in the south. The capital of course contained some of the most spectacular.

The Roman Empire, like Alexander the Great's Empire, was acquired by the absorption of older empires (Greek and Egyptian) and later farming societies (the Gauls, the Britons, the Germans). Military power was the ultimate basis of Roman Empire, but this was inseparably linked to administrative and political skill. Cicero, who campaigned for Consul (chief magistrate) in 63 BC knew much about the empire and like many politicians of this day and age knew how to secure votes:

"The whole system of credit and finance which is carried on here at home is inextricably bound up with the revenues of the Asiatic provinces. If these revenues are destroyed, our system of credit will crash...Prosecute with all your energies the war against Mithridates, by which the glory of the Roman name, the safety of our allies, our most valuable revenues, and the fortunes of innumerable citizens will be effectively preserved". (Durrant W-The Story of Civilization. Caesar and Christ p140 NY 1944).

Empire builders have their interests at heart, and a hundred years later things were not seen much differently, as shown by the accounts of Tacitus, who wrote a history of the 1st century AD. *"Britain yields gold, silver and other metals, to make it worth conquering"* (Tacitus on Britain and Germany Penguin Books p63 1954). When Claudius, in 43 AD began the conquest of Britain, the Romans may well have seen themselves as a "civilising" influence on the Britons, but the Britons saw things very differently (see quote start of section-Tacitus p79-80 Quoted in Cameron p198).

Whilst prolonged warfare reinforced the day-to-day power and the moral authority of the Senate, the expansion of territory led to serious problems at home. Julius Caesar, a man from an aristocratic family, who had been elected as consul in 59BC, had been watching

the politics of Rome. Having seen the rise of gangsterism, corruption and murder disfiguring public life and discrediting the senate, Caesar took a step, which was to mark the end of the republic. Caesar, having accumulated enormous wealth and a very loyal army decided to march on Rome in 49BC. The Senate sent for Pompey, the other great army commander, in the East, to defend Rome. Pompey was defeated in 48 BC and the senate named Caesar dictator for a year; then in 46 BC for the decade; then in 44 BC dictator for life; and so the deified Caesar was born. However, before he could do

much more on the 15th March 44 BC, he appeared in the senate and was assassinated-but Caesar's presence and godhead remained.

By the time Caesar died the Roman Empire was more or less in place, and after years of wracking civil wars, was taken over by Caesar's great nephew and adopted son, Octavian, who in 27 BC received the honorific title of "Augustus" (The Illustrious). Rome was now really a monarchy and this was demonstrated by the succession of five members of the same family. Augustus embodied Rome's sense of her historical destiny, and he had much personal integrity and authority, being celebrated by the poet Horace as the *"guardian of the ancient virtues"*. Augustus bequeathed to the state a capable successor, his stepson, Tiberius, a conscientious ruler who rejected deification with the words: "I am mortal and have mortal obligations to fulfill. I shall be content if it is thought that I have discharged the duties of a prince". Sadly the Emperors who followed him left a shameful legacy. The successor to Tiberius, Gaius Julius Caesar Germanicus, nicknamed Caligula, was tyrannical, his preferred entertainment's were public executions and torture. He exhibited his wife as nakedly as himself in front of his friends and wanted to marry his sister. He seduced senator's wives and debauched boys from the leading families. He was hated by the senate and the elite Praetorian Guards (defenders of the Capital), who eventually killed him, and proclaimed his uncle Claudius as emperor.

Confused and unstable, Claudius proved incompetent to rule the empire. His third wife plotted to have him murdered and replace him as emperor with her husband. Her audacity cost her her life and Claudius married his niece Agrippina, who after five years murdered him and, with the consent of the Guard, proclaimed Nero, her son by a former marriage, as emperor. Nero, after a promising start, resorted to despotism, poisoning Germanicus, the son of Claudius, and ordered the murder of his teacher and the greatest teacher of the time, Seneca and his own mother. Nero's suicide marked the end of monarchy and in 96 AD the Senate elected as emperor one of its own members. Fortunately for the empire, during all this turmoil the empire was never seriously threatened and in fact continued to expand.

The article will be continued in next issue...

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